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COMMENT

Gideon's Army and All That

Henry Agard Wallace is now a candidate for the presidency of the United States. While this fact has been rather coldly received by the great majority of the American people, it has brought elation and cheer to the Republican National Committee and the headquarters of the U.S. branch of Stalin's State Party.

Wallace is fond of biblical analogies; this man with (as Dorothy Thompson once put it) "his confused mind, murky principles, and great gift for self-hypnotization and mystic enthrallment with his own messianic mission" fancied himself formerly in the rôle of an old Testament prophet fighting "the standpatters worshipping Baal." Today he imagines that he has "assembled a Gideon's Army, small in number, powerful in conviction, ready for action." But instead of crushing the Midianites, it seems likely that this Gideon's Army will succeed only in establishing them more securely in power.

The cold fact is that Wallace's announcement of his candidacy has dealt a severe blow to the hopes of all those in this country who stand for independent political action. A Third Candidate is *not* a Third Party. This, above all, is what must be driven home. A new political alignment in the United States, a move toward autonomous organization of the working people, is still a most important and essential goal. But this movement must be generated from within the popular organizations, from within the masses, it cannot be created through the more or less fortuitous meeting of minds between a man who is a curious combination of confused messiah and disgruntled politician and the U.S. branch of a "foreign national party."

Wallace does not represent a genuine third party move by the people of the United States. He has been abandoned and repudiated by practically all those who are not subservient to the dictates of the Communist Party and its vast network of fellow-traveling and "innocent" organizations.

What is the bait that Wallace dangles before his potential crusaders? There is his weak reiteration of the domestic program of the New Deal and his warmed-over version of war-time rhetoric about

understanding, and getting together with, the peace-loving people of Russia. Actually his program boils down to a high-sounding declaration of principles with which scarcely anyone in his right mind would disagree (after all, who is opposed to Peace, Progress and Prosperity?) and a number of criticisms of the Administration which, had they been inspired by one representing a genuine movement of protest, might command some respect, but which fall singularly flat coming from one who only propagandizes for another "administration."

Many of Wallace's criticisms of U.S. policies may be valid, but he blissfully ignores the fact that Russia today represents a totalitarian dictatorship of the most outrageous type. For this reason, all talk about agreement with the peoples of Russia is just so much poppycock. By such dodging of the real facts behind the international situation, he does not eliminate or lessen the chances of war but rather increases them.

Abroad, Wallace's antics can only help those who hold sway over the peoples of Russia and great parts of Europe and Asia. He strengthens the cruel hand of the Russian rulers at home and abroad. He not only fails to serve but hinders the movement toward emancipation of the world's oppressed.

And at home, in these United States, by accepting the call of the Communist Party and its satellite organizations to head their ticket, he has damaged immeasurably the chances of any really independent and autonomous movement of the American people. He has set back, perhaps for several years, the possible emergence of an American labor party. Thus he has served to install more securely than ever the powers that today rule America and well merits the gratitude of reaction both at home and abroad.

We have suffered enough already from the havoc created by fools in the body politic, but nothing is more dangerous and reactionary than a Fool with a Mission.

The French Union Split and After

Shortly after midnight of the fateful day on which the Petain Government asked Germany for an armistice, the German Ambassador in the Soviet Union, Count Schulenburg, wired from Moscow: "Molotov summoned me this evening to his office and expressed the warmest congratulations of the Soviet Government on the splendid success of the German Armed Forces." This was the same Soviet Government

which now orders the French Communists to fight against the Marshall Plan in order to defend the independence of France! The Schulenburg message is published with the new documents released by the State Department. The text, of course, will be reprinted in France and it should be memorized by every Frenchman, especially by every French worker. The "warmest congratulations" transmitted by Molotov on June 17, 1940 should not be forgotten.

Naturally we don't believe that such a revelation will kill Communism in France. But every revelation of this kind, so precise and so eloquent, furthers the process of clarification which is now going on in the French labor movement. This process is a very difficult one, and—for the time being—may seem to engender more confusion than clarity. The split in the French Confederation of Labor (CGT) was an important defeat for the French Communists. But it was only the beginning of liberation and regeneration of French unionism which had been dominated and corrupted by the Communists. The Communist strength in the unions is shaken—not broken, whereas the anti-Communist forces still lack unity, being split among several different tendencies. What is hampering unity, of course, is not the diversity of ideas, but lack of organized coordination which alone can vigorously oppose and overcome Stalinist influence in the French labor movement. The anti-Communist opposition, necessary as it is, can become really strong and fruitful only if it can establish a clear opposition of principles, based on full understanding of what modern Communism actually is. So long as such understanding is lacking, the Communists still have a chance to regain control of the French labor movement.

On the other hand, the regenerated forces in French unionism must prevent French workers from going over to de Gaulle on the basis of his promise of "a reconstructed trade union movement, that is to say, a trade union movement which is professional in its bases, free, constructive, and thoroughly cleansed of politics," but also "incorporated into the State." (Quoted from de Gaulle's speech at Saint-Etienne.)

Several independent unions were already in existence before the CGT split. Discussions concerning the future structure of French unionism were also being carried on when the split occurred. The split meant that the *Force Ouvriere*, formerly a tendency within the CGT, left the organization and became a new confederation of unions. But prior to the split, a controversy arose among various other tendencies about the possibilities of cooperation with *Force Ouvriere*, and it is not

yet clear whether or not there will be sufficient unity, or at least coordination, of all forces opposing the completely Communist dominated CGT to make the revolt effective. There are pure syndicalists who want the unions completely independent of any party and who suspect *Force Ouvriere* of being too closely allied to the French Socialist Party. There are revolutionary syndicalists, many of whom do not want to be in a common front with the "reformists." There are the anarchists who already have their own National Confederation of Labor. There are also unions which do not trust the *Force Ouvriere*, believing that its leadership is not yet completely free of illusions about the possibility of a common front with the Stalinists. The salutary split is accomplished but the necessary consolidation has not yet been achieved.

Shortly before the split, Pierre Monatte, one of the spiritual leaders of revolutionary syndicalism, declared himself vigorously for participation of all anti-Communist unionists in one movement—a "second CGT." Concerning the *Force Ouvriere*, he wrote: "It will be important for us to make their followers understand the more basic reasons for our own opposition to the Stalinists: the deplorable conditions imposed upon the Russian workers; the swindle which consists of their attempt to pass off their tyrannical statism for communism; the Red Fascism that is established in Russia, and now also in Eastern Europe; the danger of war which they, more than America, represent today. All this distinguished us yesterday from the leaders of the *Force Ouvriere*. I doubt that it separates us today from their rank-and-file."

To recall how the Soviet Government greeted Hitler's victory over France should help definitely to overcome this separation.

BASIC PROBLEM SOLVED

"The President had bacon and fried mush," Charles G. Ross, the President's secretary, told the reporters, "Florida mush. It was good."

That afterthought about "Florida mush" did not click with the natives. After The Associated Press story on the President reached the streets in the local papers, Ernest Vaccaro, The Associated Press's White House correspondent, got this inquiry.

"Just what is Florida mush?" Florida editors were asking.

The fuller explanation from Mr. Ross was that the Florida mush was made by a Filipino cook from the Presidential yacht *Williamsburg*. It was just like the mush Mother Truman or any other mother used to make, the main ingredient being corn meal and water. So it might also be called Missouri mush.—*New York Times*.

HAROLD J. LASKI — MIDDLE-CLASS GIFT TO THE PROLETARIAT

Morroë Berger

Despite his other achievements, Harold J. Laski may well go down in the intellectual history of our era as a liberal socialist who finally proclaimed his faith in Russian Bolshevism just when socialists and even Bolsheviks were losing theirs; as an ideological convert to the Stalinist regime just when it became obvious that only the force of arms, not ideas, could spread Stalinism; and as an upper middle-class professor who flirted with revolutionary notions just when the proletariat and professional revolutionaries were rejecting them.

Harold J. Laski has carefully nurtured his perversity. The son of a wealthy Manchester business man, he impishly calls himself a socialist. But he twits socialists of his own kind by occasionally defending Communists and always insisting upon the "progressive" character of the Soviet Union. Lest he be too closely identified with Stalinists, however, he frequently criticizes them very effectively, as in a recent document setting forth the reasons for the British Labor Party's refusal to admit them as a group. Yet, fearing the title of Red-baiter, Laski embraces Stalin's Russia as the hope of mankind. And so that he may avoid being called an apologist, he also faithfully enumerates the U.S.S.R.'s limitations while insisting upon its inspirational role.

When he published his first book in America in 1917, at the age of twenty-four, Laski was greeted as a brilliant and promising youth. For thirty years, now, his early promise has awaited fulfilment. Meanwhile he has retained a youthful demeanor by his dependable perversity and by the adolescent tone of discovery that pervades his work even when he is only repeating ideas advanced earlier by predecessors and contemporaries.

Most thinkers who have written, as has Laski, a dozen or more books and scores of essays and magazine articles, can be discussed by

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subjects. Because of his courageous fickleness, however, Laski must be treated by periods. There are few elements of political theory on which he can be said to have a position; he has, rather, a *series* of positions. Beginning as a pluralist, Laski developed a strong individualism and finally announced himself a Marxist.

Laski's pluralism is set forth in his earliest books, all published between 1917 and 1921: *Authority in the Modern State*, *The Foundations of Sovereignty* and *Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty*. As an exponent of this kind of theory, he joined other writers who were defending the claims of the community against those of the state. Pointing out that there are organized groups whose wills conflict with the government's, he defended a "pluralistic conception of society":

"It denies the oneness of society and the state . . . the state is only one among many forms of human association. It is not necessarily more in harmony with the end of society than a church or a trade-union, or a freemasons' lodge. They have, it is true, relations which the state controls; but that does not make them inferior to the state. . . . legal inferiority is either an illegitimate postulation of Austinian sovereignty, or else the result of a false identification of state and society. . . ."

Having taken hold of an idea, the importance of the spontaneous interaction of the members of the community in realms where the state plays no positive role, Laski unfortunately went too far in his vindication of it. For even if the state does not penetrate every fastness of social life, it does establish and maintain the conditions of public order upon which social life is dependent. Thus the church and trade union are in fact legally inferior to the state, for allegiance to them is more voluntary than allegiance to the state, and disobedience of their commands is much less perilous than disobedience of the state's commands. (Laski later rejected this extreme view in his more systematic book, *The Grammar of Politics*, published in 1925.)

In his pluralist period Laski advanced some of the notions to which he gave greater emphasis a few years later. In 1919 he wrote: "Whatever the requirements of legal theory, in actual fact no man surrenders his whole being to the state. . . . The state . . . is for him sovereign only where his conscience is not stirred against its performance. . . ." This individualism was a logical extension of his adherence to pluralist doctrine, which reduces the claims of the state wherever possible.

During his years as a pluralist, too, Laski had already adopted

some socialist ideas. In *Authority in the Modern State*, for example, he first admonished his readers that "no political democracy can be real that is not as well the reflection of an economic democracy." Unlike his present confusion of "economic democracy,"¹ Laski in 1919 had a relatively precise conception of the meaning of this term, derived from the guild socialists. He meant by economic democracy self-government in industry, "the determination, that is to say, of the methods to be employed at each stage of the productive process, the settlement of tasks and hours and wages by the men themselves. . . ." Though not yet fully a Marxist, he argued that the "opinion of the state, at least in its legislative expression, will largely reproduce the opinion of those who hold the keys of economic power. . . ." At this time, however, Laski derived such views as much from early Anglo-Saxon political philosophers like James Harrington as from Karl Marx.

II

The Grammar of Politics, which appeared in 1925, was Laski's first attempt to present a systematic theory of the state. Two new elements are emphasized in it. First, Laski insisted upon the "positive" nature of the state, its obligation to increase the services it provides the community. Second, he showed much concern for the excessive power of the state over the individual, and tried to find ways to prevent its abuse.

With the triumph by 1925 of several European dictatorships, notably the Italian, Laski revised his theory of the relation of the state to other associations. While still maintaining that the state does not encompass all of society, he recognized now that it does have a coercive strength and a legal position superior to all other organizations in the community:

"It is, in fact, the final legal depository of the social will. It sets the perspective of all other organizations. . . . It is, moreover, the implied logic of this supremacy that whatever remains free of its control does so by its permission. . . ."

Precisely because he recognized this superiority of the state, Laski now felt a profound fear of its capacity to overwhelm the individual. He stressed that the state can claim the obedience of individuals only when it truly acts in their interest, and he said of this theory that it has the "supreme merit of realism," and that its advantage "lies in the importance it attaches to individual personality." So fearful was

¹ For a discussion of this confusion, see R. M. MacIver, *The Web of Government*, Macmillan, N. Y., 1947, pp. 207-209.

Laski, in 1925, that the state would suppress individual liberty, that he staked a broad claim for the freedom of man:

"He may preach the complete inadequacy of the social order. He may demand its overthrow by armed revolution. . . . He may argue that all opinions which differ from his own ought to be subject to the severest suppression. . . . To be able to do any or all of these things, with the full protection of the State in so doing, is a right that lies at the basis of freedom."

Despite this flaming rhetoric, it is nevertheless quite clear that Laski was stopping short of one thing: the assertion of the right to use force and violence against the state. But he did go further than any non-revolutionary writer in his protection of those who would use democracy to destroy it. And how one reconciles such doctrine with Laski's adulation of the Soviet Union is another mystery of the fellow-traveling mind.

In 1931 Laski delivered some lectures in the United States which were revised and issued later as *Democracy in Crisis*. Not yet an avowed Marxist, Laski at this time had already borrowed the Marxist critique of capitalism. Without a trace of his earlier pluralism or individualism, Laski attacked the institutions of representative government as incapable of leading peacefully to a new economic order. The people, he declared, were fooled into believing that control of the state would enable them to build a better economic system. Formal political power, as shown by the British Labor governments of 1924 and 1929, was not enough, for "the clue to authority lay in the possession of economic control."

With the extremism of the recent convert, Laski almost openly called for revolution in *Democracy in Crisis*. The capitalists, he said, can either accept or fight the socialists who have attained political power through peaceful means. They are most likely to fight, however. Should socialists therefore prepare for conflict and for a violent seizure of power? Since it is possible to be nonconformist without being foolhardy, Laski stepped back a bit from this position even though it would have been logical for him to go all the way. He insisted, instead, that in England and the United States a violent seizure of power by either right or left cannot succeed because of their long tradition of self-government and freedom. Just on the precipice, Laski drew back in time.

This flirtation with revolution followed some clearly totalitarian views in *Democracy in Crisis*. The disease of representative democracy,

Laski wrote, is that its "forms" are resisting the emergence of a new order. He adds pithily: "It is, I think, wholly natural that, if these forms should be found too inflexible to permit the easy birth of the new order, an attempt should be made to break them." Despite the grim sound of these words, Laski was not advocating revolution. He meant that parliamentary forms must be broken *after* the peaceful election of a socialist government: "Such an administration," he said in a frequently-cited passage, "could not, if it sought to be effective, accept the present forms of its [parliamentary government's] procedure. It would have to take vast powers, and legislate under them by ordinance and decree; it would have to suspend the classic formulae of normal opposition. . . ."

Laski in this book, as now, no longer feared the "abuses" of power to which he devoted so many pages of his earlier works.

III

After this early bold foray into the problems of the attainment and use of political power, Laski settled down somewhat, and in 1934 he brought out his first systematic exposition of the new line in *The State in Theory and Practise*. In 1930 he had written: "I yield to no one in my dissent from, say, Lenin's analysis of the nature of the modern state. But I think it urgent that his criticism should be available to society. . . ." A few years later he began to make that criticism available, without acknowledgment of its source, in his own books. This is a curious aspect of Laski's first systematic Marxist book, *The State in Theory and Practise*. He adopted Marxist-Leninist views and expressed them in almost their original language, but he mentioned only once, and then indirectly, his own intellectual debt to Marx and Lenin. He dispensed the new line as though it was being born in his own head for the first time anywhere in the world. Nor did Laski prepare his readers adequately for this shift in his political position—he simply wrote as a "Marxist" now without indicating that he was arguing from a new theoretical foundation.

Laski's adoption of the Marxist theory of the state was another step in his growing appreciation of its role in society. From the relegation of the state to a position no higher than that of any other important association of men, Laski moved to the point where he insisted that when men seek to change the social relations of production they must seek control of the state, "since it is through the special coercive power of the state that class-relations are adjusted."

Now Laski borrowed virtually all the traditional elements of Marx-

ism-Leninism, and expressed many of them in the same familiar terms. "History," he wrote, "in a word, is the record of a struggle between groups whose purpose is to defend claims to which they regard themselves as entitled . . ." ("The history of all hitherto existing society," says the *Communist Manifesto*, "is the history of class struggles.") Of historical materialism he wrote: "We are urging that the social superstructure is rooted in these economic foundations; that, accordingly, to change the relations of the latter is to change the relations of the former. . . ." (Marx wrote in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*: "With the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed." And Engels in *Anti-Dühring*: ". . . the economic structure of society always forms the real basis from which, in the last analysis, is to be explained the whole superstructure.") Laski also qualified his statement of economic determinism in familiar words: "It is no part of my case to argue, either, that all historical change is necessarily determined by the economic factor . . . I argue only that the economic factor is the predominant element . . . I fully admit the influence of personality, tradition, logic . . ." (Engels wrote in the famous letter to Starkenburg: "It is not that the economic position is the *cause and alone active*, while everything else only has a passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of the economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself.") Insisting that the state cannot be neutral in the class struggle, Laski wrote: "Its government must act as the executive committee of the class which dominates, economically, the system of production by which the society lives." (The *Communist Manifesto* states: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.")

As in *Democracy in Crisis*, Laski edged again to the brink of revolution in *The State in Theory and Practice*, and withdrew in time. He argued that ruling classes make only relatively insignificant concessions in periods of economic expansion, although he was writing at a time when capitalist "concessions" were numerous under the New Deal in an era of economic crisis. He also pointed out the strength of the revolutionary view: "Because changes in the class-structure of society have rarely been made without revolutionary means, those who draw the inference that our experience is not likely to be different from that of the past, that, therefore, the expectation of revolution is legitimate, and preparation for it the part of prudence, have a case that has not been answered by the proponents of peaceful change. . . ."

Admitting that his own analysis "postulates the inevitability of revolution as the midwife of social change," Laski insisted that the change in class relations which he advocated was "not a change that we can effect piecemeal." At the very margin of respectability again, Laski withdrew by denying the implications of his own arguments. Because the capitalists, he said, will be successful in suppressing democracy if they discern a threat to their vital interests, the working class must not seek to use violence in their quest for power. Adoption of revolutionary tactics, Laski asserted, will only breed another extreme, and the state (as in Nazi Germany) will wipe out democracy and try to crush the workers' organizations. He therefore counseled adherence to constitutional means in order that the workers may freely build up their strength.

Although Laski had accepted certain socialist principles and arguments even before his blossoming as a full-fledged Marxist, the change was nevertheless a considerable one. In 1919 he opposed collectivism because it would mean a joining of economic to political power: "Indeed, it may without exaggeration be suggested that the evils such a regime would imply are hardly less great than those of the present system. For to surrender to government officials not merely political but also industrial administration is to create a bureaucracy more powerful than the world has ever seen. . . ."

When he published his little book on *Communism*, in 1927, Laski was still doubtful about much of Marxism, but he accepted in general the socialist critique of capitalist economy. Calling himself an opponent of communism, he rejected strict economic determinism and the method of violence, and insisted that capitalism is not hopelessly incapable of satisfying the "main wants" of the workers—that, in fact, the condition of the workers, contrary to Marxian claims, had improved during the previous hundred years.

IV

Laski's book on *Communism* is revealingly different in emphasis from *The State in Theory and Practise*, which came eight years later, in 1935, after the world depression and Hitler's rise to power in Germany. In *Communism* he was genuinely concerned about Communist tyranny, but in the later book no such anxiety was expressed.

Unable to maintain a clear and consistent position in political theory,² Laski has also been unable to make up his mind about the

² See George Catlin, *The Story of the Political Philosophers*, McGraw-Hill, N. Y., 1939, pp. 654-676; and Sidney Hook's review of Laski's *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*, in *Partisan Review*, September-October, 1943, Vol. X, p. 442.

Communist Party in England. From *Communism* (1927) one would conclude that the author would reject organizational ties with Communists, but that he might agree to act jointly with them on specific issues. In 1937 Laski was among those in the British Labor Party who were defeated by a five-to-one vote when they favored admitting the Communists. Early in 1941, during the Nazi-Soviet pact, Laski attacked the Communists as advocates of violence in politics, and charged that if they were to succeed in their aims, "the resultant confusion would give Hitler the one certain chance he possesses of successful invasion."

After the Nazi attack upon Russia, Laski's views on local Communists changed. In 1943 he argued that unity among the American, British and Russian working classes was necessary to safeguard the proletariat from fascism after the war. Deploring the fact that even a second world war had not brought American Socialists and Communists together, he blamed this situation on the Socialists. The following year he wrote that the "Communist who yesterday was an outlaw is today a partner in our purposes . . ." (Suggesting that we have been able to understand that this fact alters our attitude toward the "world about us," he unfortunately did not make clear whether he meant Communists in Western countries too, or only in Russia.) Yet in 1946 he opposed the admission of the British C.P. into the Labor Party, for this among other reasons:

"They must therefore destroy the very parties with which they seek alliance in order to command their resources for their own ends. To do this, they must declare that they are at one with them, loyal to their principles, ready to accept their rules, prepared to serve under their leaders. But since none of these declarations are true, they must also, at the same time, deny those principles, maneuver round the rules, and do all in their power both to discredit the leaders they agree to serve, and, if possible, secure their places when they are discredited."

V

In his attitude toward the Soviet Union Laski has been only slightly less changeable and much more inconsistent. His views on the U.S.S.R. have been steadily favorable, except for a short interlude, but they have been and are difficult to reconcile with his sharp criticisms of the regime and his general political outlook.

Before 1939 Laski on the whole rejected the U.S.S.R. as a model state, but found in it many admirable qualities. For example, in an essay on "Law and Justice in Soviet Russia," published in 1935 (four

years after the revealing trials of the Mensheviks and only one year before the first of the "Moscow trials") Laski praised the form and spirit of Soviet justice. In "a month's examination" he was able to find many features of Soviet law which were superior to anything in the common law.

During the Nazi-Soviet pact Laski was more critical of Stalin's Russia. Early in 1941 he said that "no evidence exists of any willingness on the part of the Soviet Union to come to the assistance of the French workers, directly or indirectly." But only two and a half years later, in September 1943, Laski was able to assert that "the Soviet Union is the central support upon which the future of working-class interests depends." In his one book in the period of the pact with Germany, *Where Do We Go From Here?*, he censured the Soviet Union for increasing fascist power, endangering the future of the U.S.S.R. itself, diminishing world-wide faith in the land of socialism, and displaying (in Finland) "all the worst features of Machiavellian statecraft."

When Hitler restored the liberal intellectuals' faith in the Soviet Union by invading it, Laski finally found the new faith by which our civilization can be regenerated. This faith he expounded in two curious books, *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (1943) and *Faith, Reason, and Civilization* (1944).

In *Reflections* Laski repeated many of his previous remarks about the approaching revolution, the weakness of liberalism, the need for socialization and for the abolition of sovereignty. His primary concern, however, was to show that despite the "ugly twist its control has taken," the "great end of the [Russian] Revolution remains in being." A good part of the book is devoted to an unsuccessful attempt to clarify and prove this noble statement. One of Laski's main problems, of course, was the plain fact of Soviet terror and dictatorship. Although most of his later writings have been hortatory rather than merely descriptive, on the Communist tyranny Laski (like so many other liberal apologists) suddenly disdained to praise or blame, and called instead for understanding: "The most urgent problem of the Russian Revolution is not the praise or blame it should exact, but the need for its understanding . . ."

After discussing the origins of (and the necessity for) the dictatorship in Russian history and the nature of the Bolshevik experiment, Laski did not flinch from enumerating its undesirable features or from insisting that the bureaucracy's end is more the retention of its own

state power than the attainment of socialism. Yet in the very next paragraph he claimed that the Soviet bureaucracy does not hold power merely for the sake of power. Despite endless repetition in previous books that power feeds upon itself, Laski could argue that the dictatorship would decline with the "growth of a wide popular faith in its [the U.S.S.R.'s] security."

The accomplishments of the Russian revolution Laski listed as follows: (1) It "opened up an immense reservoir of new talent" among the leadership and the masses. (2) It spread education widely. (3) It liberated women. (4) It advanced the health, sanitation and safety of the workers. (5) It instituted the planning of production for "social need." (6) It gave science greater scope. (7) It developed a humane judicial and prison system, "the sphere of political offenses apart."

Among Laski's important criticisms of the Soviet Union are these: (1) "The dictatorship of the proletariat, in fact, became necessarily the dictatorship of the Communist Party . . ." (2) The Bolsheviks could not possibly have carried out their program of industrialization democratically, and would have been "overwhelmingly swept from power" had they permitted a popular election. (3) Stalin and the bureaucracy "have been compelled . . . to make every critic an enemy." (4) There are "eulogies of Stalin in terms more fitted to a god than to a man." (5) Artistic freedom is limited. (6) Especially since 1927 Stalin and his associates "acquired a vested interest in power which they were not prepared to surrender. To that vested interest there have been sacrificed both democracy in the party, and the greater democracy beyond to which it would gradually have led." (7) "Despite the pledges of the Constitution of 1936, there is no freedom of speech, except for Stalin's adherents, no freedom of the press or assembly. Everyone knows that the elections are a farce . . . Freedom of movement is gravely restricted. . . . There is arbitrary arrest; there is long imprisonment, and even execution without trial. . . ." The secret police are powerful, the hostage system is used, children denounce their parents, and the victims of fascism have not found a haven in the U.S.S.R. (8) The Soviet-Nazi pact of 1939 "became a shameless exhibition, on Stalin's part, of complete indifference to the fate of the working-class outside the Soviet Union . . ."

In the face of these charges Laski was able, in *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*, to hail the great and continuing example of the Soviet Union. Unimpeded by considerations of consistency, he

went much further in this adulation a year later, in *Faith, Reason, and Civilization*.

VI

Back in 1931, in the lectures later published as *Democracy in Crisis*, Laski had noted civilization's loss of faith: "The general temper of the world is one of profound and widespread disillusionment. Our generation seems to have lost its scheme of values. Certainty has been replaced by cynicism; hope has given room to despair." Laski found his faith in the idea of the Russian Revolution and in the U.S.S.R.

Laski's argument in *Faith, Reason, and Civilization* runs as follows: We need a new "system of values." Since the growth of science, religion has been unable to provide this new system. Only the idea upon which the Russian Revolution was founded can be the basis for new values. Like Christianity in its own day, the idea of the Russian Revolution gives the masses a "sense of individual fulfilment that is at present attainable nowhere else. . . ."

Despite his familiarity with the literature of social science and philosophy, Laski in this book writes with less precision and clarity than ever before. He does not stop to examine his assumptions, to test his conclusions, and even to see whether he is using words intelligibly or for sheer emotional impact. This is a book not of political theory or analysis, but one of faith, refusing to go beyond symbols and fetishes to historical realities.

As is appropriate in a book of faith, Laski often compares Communists to the propagators of another faith, the early Christians. In *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* he had likened Communists to religious fanatics—in order to explain them better. But in the later book he offers this comparison in recommendation of their laudable faith in their program. "Wherever the idea of the Russian Revolution has taken hold," he writes, "it has bred in its exponents a yearning for spiritual salvation . . ." One may legitimately ask where one may find evidence of this yearning in Vishinsky, Thorez, Duclos, Togliatti, Rakosi and Marshal Tito.

This religious adulation of the "exponents" of the idea of the Russian Revolution Laski vigorously contradicted only a few years later in his statement of the reasons for which the Labor party in 1946 refused the British Communist Party's perennial request for permission to affiliate. The "exponents" of the idea of the Russian Revolution, Laski says in this document, are "willing to sacrifice all regard for truth and straight dealing in social relations to the conquest of that

vanguard they need for the future.” Though still accepting the idea of the Russian Revolution as valid for our time, Laski specifically distrusts much of Lenin’s tactics. He argues that socialists and liberals are correct in rejecting “organic unity” with Communists outside the Soviet Union, yet admits the possibility of a “genuine *entente*” between Western Socialists and the Russian Communist Party even though he states quite plainly that the Russian C.P. directs the Western parties in “all matters of policy”—hence in the policy of duplicity itself. One can conclude only that while Laski cannot blind himself to the conspiratorial features of the non-Russian Communist parties, he is too sentimental or respectful of sheer power to take a forthright position on the Russian party, which is by his own analysis the source of the policies followed by Communists in France, England and the United States.

VII

During the postwar tension between the West and the Soviet Union, Laski has continued to defend the latter and to “explain” its conduct favorably. It has become increasingly clear that Laski is no longer a political scientist. He is the preacher of a faith. His reported self-assuredness and domineering personality, and his capacity for assuming his audience’s agreement with him and for ignoring the sources of his own beliefs, are all assets in this calling. Appropriately for an evangelist, he has always had a flair for getting into exciting situations. In 1919 he happened to be at Harvard University during the Boston police strike and became involved in a celebrated academic freedom case by attacking the University, in a *New Republic* article, for supporting the city against the strikers. In 1945 he happened to be chairman of the Labor Party (a position rotated yearly) during the first general election since 1935, and helped make a campaign issue of himself.

Another British political writer, George Catlin, has aptly called Harold J. Laski “a broker of Marxism to the middle-class intelligentsia.” He has certainly been a confusing and inconsistent one. By his American admirers (who far outnumber those this prophet can count in his own country) Laski’s changing opinions may be laid to a youthful vision, a willingness to re-examine his position when it is challenged. But one feels that such a variable nature must be interpreted as the manifestation of a common instability among well-meaning but fuzzy-minded liberal intellectuals, rather than as evidence of a commendable flexibility.

THE REAL LENIN

Mark Vishniak

For the first time I had occasion to see and hear Lenin some five years before the revolution, at a public meeting in Paris. He spoke against his friends and associates of yesterday and tomorrow—Gorky, Lunacharsky, Bogdanov—who had temporarily strayed from the right way “to search for God.” Lenin hated the Deity with a kind of personal fanatical hatred. “Every god worship is copulation with death,” he wrote.

I saw before me a short slightly stooping man, homely and unprepossessing. He had a high steep forehead, a bristly moustache, and a rather neglected reddish wedged-shaped beard. Unusual were the high cheek-bones and the narrowly slit mongoloid eyes. They were piercing and searching even when they smiled, and there was a malicious gleam in them. The speaker was restless, his whole body was in motion. He started his speech with his hands in his pockets, but soon took them out to gesticulate. From time to time he smoothed the remnants of hair on the bald dome of his head. At moments he jerked his whole body back, pushing both thumbs symmetrically into the opening of his waistcoat. He listened to his opponents with half-shut eyes, or else squinted at them with his right eye from behind the spread-out fingers of one hand.

He spoke in a loud voice, very distinctly, with a rather upper-class accent, and punctuated his speech with a dry petulant chuckle. He did not pick his words and seemed utterly indifferent to their artistic expressiveness or precision. He was not a “master of words” in any sense. His approach to oratory was strictly utilitarian—it was a vehicle to convey a meaning. There were no florid expressions, no rhetorical flights, no vacuous stretches; everything was pedestrian and to the point. His vocabulary was colorless, rather limited and very monotonous. Stale clichés, hackneyed metaphors and similes were

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tediously recurrent. The words were chosen solely for their immediate effectiveness, with the purpose only of gaining and holding the attention of the audience.

Lenin did not conceal his intention—to hammer a definite idea into his listeners' minds. He did not circle like a vulture above his victim before swooping down and seizing it. No—he faced his audience squarely, admitting his purpose with almost cynical candor. He was neither subtle nor pliant. Just as his writings are neither in form nor contents comparable to those of Marx or Engels, so his oratory had little in common with the inspired eloquence of the great “born” orators.

Lenin's speeches are full of digressions, parentheses, interpolations (small brackets within large brackets); words and whole sentences are excessively emphasized. The argumentation disregards both the demands of economy in the means of expression and the laws of logical order and consistency. It is primitive and boring; instead of sharpening and deepening the theme, it simplifies and vulgarizes it. Lenin definitely preferred the wide diffusion of simplified ideas to any gain in quality, in depth and in truth. For he was interested not in truth and in comprehending the world, but in making it over according to his own views.

Lenin again and again attacked his theme from various angles, endlessly repeating what he had already said and proved. These reiterations had the effect of lulling and hypnotizing the audience: what at first may have come as a shock, after so many repetitions already seemed familiar and even irrefutably proven. . . . Lenin was by no means resourceful in the matter of arguments, he preferred the old reliable stock to the unexplored and untested. As a man of a single idea, he was an orator of a single theme. He thought only revolution, talked revolution, lived revolution. He had no time therefore to construct a fine speech with a flawless argumentation. He denied any independent literary values. “Literature is part of the general proletarian cause!”

As artifice was alien to him, so was art—both in his writing and in his oratory.

Some “Ifs” of History

It would, of course, be futile to argue that without Lenin the truly national revolution of February would not have failed, that the civil war would have been avoided and the external war brought to a suc-

cessful end, that Russia would not have suffered from famine, as in 1921 and again in the thirties, but would have flourished, etc. Such assertions are difficult to prove. But that the revolution, were it not for Lenin, would not have occurred in October and might not have occurred at all, that the civil war would not have assumed the form it took under Lenin, that the treaty of Brest-Litovsk would not have been concluded at the time and on the terms insisted upon by Lenin, and Lenin alone,—all this is more than mere guesswork. There are facts to confirm these conjectures, as well as admissions by Lenin himself, which in part became known only after his death.

One may feel justified in maintaining that without Lenin there would have been no "October" such as the world has witnessed. Lenin, his mentality, character, life story—hold the key to the "immortal" principles of the October revolution.

Lenin's life story is extremely simple, far less involved than that of other historical figures of similar achievement and with a similar title to fame. It is more of a piece and simpler even than that of many an ordinary man of our time, playing no part in the political destinies of his country.

This does not mean, of course, that he was a sad nonentity, such as, for instance, the Robespierre depicted by Taine,—or a mere puppet driven by elemental forces, a "product of the unconscious hive-like life of mankind," like the Napoleon drawn by Tolstoy. No, Lenin was by no means a nonentity, nor was he a mere criminal or madman. He doubtlessly was an outstanding personality, endowed with intense passion and a powerful will,—despite his colorless personal life and the outward unimpressiveness of his figure. He was a man of not very great originality, by no means a genius, yet a man of big stature and in many ways superior. What made him outstanding was mainly the passionate intensity of his character.

Lenin's Personality

Lenin was a man of a single passion, a single idea, a single endeavor. From the day Vladimir Ulianov became Lenin, he had no life of his own. His life is identical with his political activity. His biography is merged with the history of the Russian revolutionary movement during three decades—from 1894 to 1924.

Lenin was a "one-love-man" both in his private and in his public life. To his last day he remained faithful to his *Minoga* (Lamprey)—nickname of Nadezhda Krupskaya—whom he had met during the

first years of his underground work in Petersburg. His appreciation of her as an invaluable secretary and code expert, utterly devoted to the secret organization, soon developed into a warm personal feeling; and their union was later given the sanction of the Church by a rural priest in Siberia.

Lenin's manifold interests—in people, science, philosophy, journalism, statistics—were completely dominated by his insatiable passion for the political struggle and the revolution. On the revolution, as the universal remedy, he pinned all his faith and hope. It was the Beautiful Lady to whom he devoted all his thoughts, emotions and efforts, and to whom he remained faithful—as to Krupskaya—to his last day.

It should be noted, however, that this was not so much an individual as a generic trait—common to that generation of Russian intelligentsia which under the rule of the Czars worshipped socialism and revolution as fervently as the early Christians worshipped the new God in a pagan world. Hunted and persecuted, the socialist and the revolutionary were isolated from reality and from normal social relationships. And so they created their own world of ideas and emotions, their own philosophy and ethics—and yet this world was far from being an imaginary world of dreams and Utopias. It was a real world—hidden from the outsider's eyes, dug in under-ground, yet a world in which people actually lived, thought and felt according to their own laws and moral code.

Those who chose to join this hidden world abandoned their families, renounced rank and wealth and all the privileges of birth. They changed their names and their appearance. Sometimes this was derided as a pose. Yet it was much more than that. It was a determined and very real repudiation of the iniquitous "bourgeois" way of life, built upon blood and tears. These men and women were ready for any personal sacrifice, and often sealed their readiness with death. Voluntarily and without reservation, they gave up all the joys of a personal life, the better to serve their social ideal.

Lenin belonged to that type of Knight-Templars, of selfless ascetics and at the same time ruthless fanatics, who had already arisen among the earliest zealots of Russian freedom. Like moles, the revolutionaries undermined the rotting foundations of the Czarist autocracy. And as the process of the decay dragged on and on, and the results of all their efforts and sacrifices, year after year, appeared pitifully small—the hearts of the fighters hardened, and the selflessness of the ascetic more and more yielded to the fury of the zealot. Again and again the gallant knights turned into fanatics and bigots.

Political and Ideological Roots

Vladimir Ulianov was 13 when in 1883, in the Petropavlovsk prison-fortress near Petersburg, death came to prisoner No. 5—the famous revolutionary Nechayev. He was 15 when in Paris Elisée Reclus, Edouard Vaillant and other prominent Frenchmen carried the remains of Tkachov out of the insane asylum “Sainte Anne”—the same Tkachov who, in the early sixties, had been one of the first Russians to proclaim his adherence to Marx, the first even to mention the name of Marx in Russian literature. Vladimir Ulianov, who from the age of 17, ever since the execution of his brother Alexander, had been an enthusiast for the revolution and later for Marxism, could hardly help being attracted by Tkachov’s ideas. In the writings of the first Russian Marxist, the future founder of “Leninism” could read such a sentence as this: “For the eradication of despotism in Russia, it will be necessary to destroy the entire population above the age of 25. . . .”

Who can tell how deeply the young mind may have been impressed and influenced by such words?

The same Tkachov wrote: “To harbor constantly ideas in one’s mind which are not destined to be converted into reality—is torture, the most excruciating torture. . . .”

It may well be that Tkachov ended his days in an insane asylum because he felt himself unable to pursue the realization of his haunting ideas with the relentless energy shown by his contemporary, Nechayev, —the Jacobin and anarchist in one.

Compare the secret society “Popular Vengeance” and the “Catechism” of Nechayev with the organization and ethic of Lenin’s “professional revolutionists,” and you will find an amazing similarity both in the theory and the practice of groups separated by half a century. To Nechayev’s “frightful, general, complete and merciless destruction” corresponds Lenin’s “merciless extermination.” Nechayev’s emblem is the axe, Lenin’s—the hammer and sickle. In both movements the “cell of five” is the basis of the organization, each of the five members becoming in his turn the center of a new “cell of five,” and so on. Every full member is surrounded by lower ranking members, only partly initiated into the mysteries of the society. They are part of the total resources of the revolution, to be disposed of by the leaders as they chose. “To love the people means to lead them into the fire.” “Burden your followers with tasks, make them feel that they are useful to a great cause, and he who gains influence over them, will be able

to lead them wherever he wants." Thus wrote and acted Nechayev. Did Lenin act differently?

Long before the abortive revolution of 1905, the nearest collaborators of Lenin used to call him a second Nechayev. There was, however, a fundamental difference between the two: while Nechayev preached his ethics under conditions of persecution and illegality, never emerging from underground,—Lenin defended and practiced the same moral principles even after he had become the absolute master of a vast empire.

Lenin never sought harmony between ends and means. Every method was good enough for him so long as it achieved results. He managed his own life and that of others according to certain principles, and a pivotal principle of his policy was the denial of moral values. He often repeated: "There are no morals in politics! There is only expediency!" "The party is not a boarding-school for young ladies. One should never apply to party members the narrow standards of Philistine morals. A scoundrel may be of use to us just because he is a scoundrel."

Lenin himself never played cards, never drank anything stronger than beer, never indulged in revelry, and in a physical sense he never took part in any crimes against property and personal freedom. Yet in others he tolerated vice, drunkenness, corruption and outright criminality with amazing indulgence. He was not interested in the motives and objectives which drove people to revolutionary action, but only in the results, and in nothing else.

"It does not matter," he would say, "that Comrade Krassikov has squandered party funds in a brothel, but it is scandalous that this should have disorganized the transportation of illegal literature. . . ."

To the end of his days a convinced Marxist, he never ceased to fight against anarchism. "Anarchist" was for him as much a term of abuse as "liberal." And yet it was from Bakunin, the father of Russian anarchism, that he borrowed his conception of revolution as war—"the only legitimate, righteous, just and truly sublime war of all wars known to history."

Accordingly, Lenin considered it the task of any provisional revolutionary government to organize war and not "law and order." And thus he defined the duties of professional revolutionists:

"To arm themselves with anything they can lay hands on (a rifle, a gun, a bomb, a knife, a stick, a kerosene-drenched rag to set fire with, a rope ladder, a spade to build barricades, barbed wire, nails against cavalry, etc.) Never to expect help from above, from outside—to

procure everything themselves. . . . To start training for war immediately, by means of practical operations: killing a spy, blowing up a police station, robbing a bank to provide funds for the uprising, etc. It is imperative to start this training through action at once, without delay. . . . Do not shrink from these experimental attacks; they may, of course, degenerate into excesses, but this is a worry of the future. Our trouble today is our excessive theorizing, our bookish inertia, our senile dread of initiative. Let every detachment train for action—and be it only by beating up a policeman. . . .”

This was the Marxist-Leninist conception of the revolution even before 1905. And his practical policies also conformed to that same Bakunin’s precepts:

“To be a revolutionary means to be in a minority and to force the will of that minority upon the majority.”

“If you are the people’s friend, lead them forward against guns! The people themselves do not know what is good or bad for them.”

“To the revolutionist the present is nothing, the future—everything.”

Jacobin, Plebeian, Marxist, Anarchist

After the failure of the revolution of 1905, Lenin openly avowed himself a “Jacobin” and called for “plebeian” vengeance on the foes of freedom.

Even then, those close to him designated him for the part of Robespierre. (As early as 1904, Trotsky called him the “Little Robespierre”). And he would jokingly promise them to act with greater skill and energy in the next revolution. At that time he outlined the plan he put into practice years later:

“We shall ask: on which side are you? For or against the revolution? If against—we shoot you! If for—follow us and work!”

Krupskaya would object: “That way you’ll kill off all the best ones—all those with the courage of their convictions. . . .”

World War I was a turning-point in Lenin’s life. And it was in relation to this war that Lenin revealed, as never before, the “geometric” quality of his mind.

Not for a moment did Lenin feel that it was his own nation, his own country whose fate hung in the balance, depending on which side would win the war. The great struggle was just another predatory undertaking of priests, capitalists and governments of various countries, all equally rapacious. Lenin’s attitude towards war and peace remained on a general plane, without consideration of concrete historical condi-

tions. This was characteristic of his anti-historic mentality. What mattered to him was to solve a problem; the method of the solution was of minor importance. Hence his readiness to wait without indulging in impossible dreams—to wait patiently for the inevitable to happen in conformity with all the laws of logic and social-economic dialectics. Lenin sought the mathematical point equally distant from both belligerent sides and thought of himself as soaring above the battle—*au-dessus de la mêlée*.

The War rendered Lenin more irritable, vehement, intolerant. The circle of his followers was shrinking. But even among the few who remained, he was tirelessly ferreting out heretics and dissidents. Even Lenin's facial expression, according to his intimates, underwent a change.

During the Balkan war on the eve of the World War, Lenin wrote to his friend, Maxim Gorky, who shared many of his views:

"A war between Austria and Russia would be a mighty good thing for the cause of revolution in all Eastern Europe. Yet there is little likelihood that Franz Joseph and dear Nicky will give us that pleasure. . . ."

When 18 months later "that pleasure" was actually given him, his Epicurean conception of war as a pleasure made room for the Heraclitian one of war as the father and mother of all things. This new attitude of the revolutionary Marxist Lenin very nearly coincided with that of the prominent French romantic-reactionary Joseph de Maistre who a century earlier had written of war as a "necessity for the moral progress of mankind, stimulating the nations softened by peace and imparting life, movement and fire to everything in society." However, it is neither from de Maistre that Lenin borrowed his new wisdom nor from Dostoevski who, despite his preaching of Christianity, thought that "war develops the spirit of brotherhood." Lenin took his new conception of war from a famous contemporary of de Maistre—the Prussian General von Clausewitz.

Lenin considered Clausewitz one of the greatest writers of military history. He went so far in his admiration as to see in him a forerunner of Hegel—the philosopher, in his opinion, having fecundated the strategic ideas of the General. Lenin made a careful synopsis of the works of Clausewitz, translating and copying whole chapters and adding many marginal notes: "How true!" "Clever and witty!" "Very pointed remark about the political soul as the essence of war!" "War as a part of a whole, and that whole—politics!" "The nature of the

political objective has a decisive influence upon the conduct of war!" "The political leader and the distrust of man!" . . .

In the ideas of the Prussian General and in his line of reasoning Lenin found much that was congenial to him. To the end of his life he preserved his admiration for Clausewitz and a feeling of gratitude to him for much useful knowledge; and he transmitted this high appraisal to his disciples. Thus the theories of Marx, Bakunin and Clausewitz became oddly interwoven in Leninism.

In 1905 Lenin had adopted the anarchist Bakunin's idea that *revolution is war*. Ten years later, during the imperialist war, General Clausewitz taught him that the reverse is also true, that *war is revolution*—that is, for Lenin, the war of the oppressed against the oppressors, the "only great, just and legitimate war."

To Clausewitz Lenin owes two other of his favorite post-war principles: "No great European civilized power can be conquered without the help of inner disturbances"; and "war is a continuation of politics by other methods." This last assertion Lenin turned inside out, insisting that politics is essentially war, only conducted by other means.

In this way the class struggle aiming at the physical destruction ("merciless extermination") of the enemy, was given a new military and strategic basis and justification.

Lenin rejected the World War only because it was an external imperialist war and not an inter-class struggle. The yearning of the pacifists for peace at any price Lenin branded as "popish sentimentality." His own slogan was: "Raise the banner of civil war!" In the interests of socialism, universal brotherhood and peace, "it is not enough to abstain from desiring the victory of one's own imperialists"—it is necessary to contribute actively to the defeat of "one's own" government, "which after all is nothing but a mere agent of the multi-millionaire firm England-France. . . ."

And in this Lenin's approach was truly original.

Patriotism and Internationalism

Only many years later it became known that on the very first night after his return to Russia, Lenin had declared to a circle of followers gathered around him in the residence of the ballerina Kzhesinska:

"Modern socialism is the enemy of the international proletariat. The very name of socialism has been defiled and dishonored by treachery. We should have nothing in common with it. It cannot be purified,

it must be rejected, cast off like dirty underwear. We must put on a clean shirt and call ourselves the Communist Party. . . .”

At that time this proposition met with no response. Even Lenin’s closest companions-in-arms, trained in his school, rejected it.

Prior to storming the bastions of political power, Lenin had therefore to carry the attack against his own party. For a time he left the dissident “Old Bolsheviks” and party generals alone and addressed himself to the junior officers and corporals of the party. Through the medium of these lower rank commanders, Lenin was able to gain control over the march of revolutionary events and to increase his hold on the lower stratum of the party and the people. And once the rank and file of the party had been won over, nothing was left to the generals and adjutants but to plead guilty and surrender.

Lenin never doubted for a moment that he and his cause would triumph. Why? What was the basis of his supreme confidence when he kept urging his Central Committee to rise against Kerensky’s provisional government, repeating again and again: “We shall win victory without any doubt?” Documents published after Lenin’s death furnish an answer to this question:

“Our victory is certain, because the people is already *near despair* and utter ‘*brutalization.*’” (Italics and quotation marks are Lenin’s own.)

Despair and brutalization were Lenin’s chief psychological trump cards. No less primitive was his political approach:

“It is the duty of the party—once it has succeeded in concealing from the enemy its decision to start an armed uprising—to shift not only the blame but also the initiative to the adversary. . . .”

And so Lenin, concealing his decision behind a mask of democratic legality, did his best to shift both the responsibility for and the initiative of the civil war to Kerensky’s “Government of national treason.”

Lenin played no direct part in the October uprising. He did not participate personally in the seizure of the Telegraph, the Arsenal, the railway stations, nor in the dispersion of the Preliminary Parliament by force and the bombardment of the Winter Palace. Nevertheless, his role in the revolution was unique, exceptional, decisive. He was the inspiration and driving force behind it, the chief planner and strategist who led the operation of seizure of power by the Bolshevik Party to a successful conclusion. He had been the first to foresee the possibility of an overturn by means of a “brief” nocturnal attack by a

"small but well-organized, well-armed and centralized" band of professional revolutionists. It was he who created the whole political and ideological armature of the October revolution. From his hiding place in Finland he directed and manipulated the whole operation, issuing his orders and appeals in the name of rather undefinable concepts and collective entities; the Revolution, Socialism, the Working Class.

Like any doctrinaire, Lenin was more concerned with the future than the present. It is highly characteristic that during those fateful October days and nights, in the very midst of the conflagration and with victory still in the balance, Lenin—foreseeing his arrest or even assassination—was worried about the preservation of documents he considered of high historical value.

He admitted that sometimes he was making mistakes, but "those mistakes should be corrected not by experts but by ourselves. The correction should come from above only." Our decrees are not perfect, maybe, and "our government may not last long, but those decrees will be part of history. Future revolutionaries will learn from them."

Although Lenin had spent most of his life bent over books in libraries or engrossed in scholastic hair-splitting disputations about programs, he yet possessed an extraordinary grasp of factual relationships of power. And the Marxist Lenin set a high value on strength and power. While he admired Engels' critical essay on Eugen Dühring, the reactionary and anti-Semite, as a polemical masterpiece, Lenin actually followed Dühring and not Marx and Engels. Dühring's ideas are an integral part of that unnatural and contradictory complex which later came to be known as "Leninism."

Lenin so tenaciously sought power because, contrary to Marx, with him politics took precedence over economics. He was not ambitious in the banal sense of the word. Power was never for him a means for personal aggrandizement. But he was insatiably avid for power as the instrument for the realization of his social ideal.

Just as he was not ambitious, so he was not selfish in a vulgar sense. He was not an egoist, but a supreme egotist, an ego-centrist who identified his own person with the interests of the cause and would admit nothing but his own interpretation of revolution, socialism, the welfare of the working class.

Revolution Means War—War Means Revolution

Bakunin had taught Lenin that revolution was war; Clausewitz—that war was revolution. As the revolutionary process gained in depth

and intensity, turned from the bourgeois-democratic track and took a socialist course, Lenin reversed the ancient Roman rule: if you want peace, prepare for war. If you want war, take any peace you can get, he said to himself. Because he had set his heart on civil war, he was ready for peace at any price with the Germans.

"Civil war means the triumph of Soviet power!" he declared, and signed the separate peace with perfect serenity of mind. "I don't care what will become of Russia, to hell with it!" he said to one of the Old Bolsheviks shortly after October,—“all this is only the road to a world revolution.”

Eyewitnesses relate that at the conference called for the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty, Lenin amazed the assembly by his good temper and high spirits. His face radiated deep satisfaction. More than ever he was imbued with the sense of having done the right thing. His coat unbuttoned, his thumbs stuck as usual in his waistcoat opening, he strolled behind the speakers' platform, following the speakers attentively. The sharper a speaker attacked him, the broader was his self-complacent grin. Sometimes he would burst into loud laughter, ostentatiously holding his sides, as if to emphasize the utter absurdity of the arguments.

Insisting on the necessity of the immediate conclusion of peace—and be it a separate and “obscene” peace—Lenin least of all thought of furthering German interests. And yet viewed objectively—just as the notorious sealed car in which Lenin crossed Germany on his way from exile to Russia had been the point of intersection of Lenin's and Kaiser Wilhelm's interests—so at Brest-Litovsk the divergent paths of the German Emperor and the leader of revolutionary communism crossed once again and for a moment coincided. Each of them acted in his own interests, but it so happened that what each did, immensely benefited his opponent, for a moment turned partner.

The admirers of Lenin's genius maintain that he possessed the gift of prophetic vision and that his forecasts were infallibly correct. This is not true, or, at least, highly exaggerated. Lenin foretold that the imperialist war would turn into a civil war. He proved right—but only with regard to Russia. With regard to the rest of the world, this was a fateful miscalculation. He proved right again when he predicted that the “outrageous” treaty of Brest-Litovsk would be short-lived, but he was badly mistaken in the assumption on which he based this expectation, and which he adduced to justify the highly unpopular treaty. He prophesied that the German Communist Karl Liebknecht would

rescue revolutionary Russia "from all her troubles." But Liebknecht, as we know, instead of coming to power and saving Russia, himself fell a victim to reaction in Germany. What actually delivered Russia—and Lenin's party from the grip of the outrageous annexionist peace of Brest-Litovsk, was the victory of those very "imperialists" he hated: "the multi-millionaire firm England-France. . . ."

Lenin was cruel, but not by nature nor because of a diseased mind. His cruelty was of the most implacable kind—a cruelty rooted in revolution and socialism as he understood them. The executive agents of Lenin's regime, both on the central and the local level, amply proved their loyalty to this principle. *The Red Sword*, organ of the Cheka, declared: "Ours is a new moral code. Our humanitarianism is absolute, for it is based on the glorious ideal of the abolition of tyranny and oppression. All is permitted to us, for we are the first in the world to draw the sword not in behalf of enslavement and oppression, but for the sake of freedom and emancipation from servitude."

Lenin was fond of small children and animals—especially cats—and loved flowers tenderly. "It pains me, you know," he would say, mournfully looking at broken branches of lilacs. . . . This did not prevent him from being one of the most zealous defenders of the Red Terror. He never tired of inciting to it those who still hesitated, and justifying it for those who still doubted.

"We shall destroy everything, and on the ruins we shall erect our temple," Lenin would shout, "and this will be the temple of universal happiness! . . . All that exists is obsolete and rotten . . . it must be destroyed! . . . Take, for instance, the bourgeoisie,—or democracy, if you prefer the term. It is doomed, and in abolishing it, we are only completing the inescapable historical process. . . . We shall show no mercy to anything that smells of counter-revolution. . . . To fight counter-revolutionaries, whoever they may be, I have Comrade Uritzky (head of Cheka). Maybe you don't know him? I shouldn't advise you to make his acquaintance!" His eyes would flash ominously.

The same Lenin loved music, and listening to Beethoven; he "wanted to stroke the heads of people who could create such beauty while living in this vile hell."

He liked hunting and although he was a mediocre marksman, he enjoyed shooting hares and wild ducks, partridges and grouse. But he never had occasion to shoot human beings with his own hands. This made it all the easier for him to defend on principle the practical neces-

sity of the "merciless extermination" of all the enemies of the workers' and peasants' regime, of the "parasite" classes, etc.

Lenin denied humanitarianism not only on grounds of principle; he utterly despised it as the "maudlin slobber" of highbrow weaklings. He fought to the death—and exterminated—not only individuals but whole groups and classes of the population. And he waged war not only on people, but on whole categories of emotion which he considered detrimental to his ideas. Shame, pity, reverence—all this he branded as bourgeois fictions, to be ruthlessly stamped out. And ashamed of their sense of shame, people repressed the feeling of pity and tried to kill in their hearts all reverence for higher values.

The Disinterested Herostrates

Many centuries ago, according to legend, the magnificent temple of Diana at Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the world, was set on fire by a madman—Herostrates—with the sole purpose of immortalizing the name of the incendiary. Lenin had no such ambition. Not even those would accuse him of it who regard him as the quasi-maniacal instigator of the civil war which reduced a great country to ashes and cost the lives of millions of human beings.

Lenin was not a self-seeker. He did not live in a crystal palace, did not eat from golden plates, did not drink sweet wine out of silver goblets, did not sprawl on rich couches, did not indulge in orgies. . . . He always wore the same dark-colored suit with pipe-like trousers that seemed a trifle too short for his legs, with a similarly abbreviated single-breasted coat, a soft white collar and old tie. The necktie was always the same: black, with little white flowers, one particular spot showing wear.

Lenin's ideas and pretensions were Utopian, fantastic, sometimes crazy. Yet he wanted nothing for himself, and not for personal reasons was he interested in power. We should call him therefore neither a second Attila nor a Marat, neither another Napoleon nor Peter the Great, neither Christ nor Judas—all these comparisons have been made by his admirers or detractors. We should call him the Disinterested Herostrates—disinterested as to personal motives, and Herostrates for the objective results of his lifework.

PLIGHT OF HIGHER LEARNING

Brooklyn College will present a course on how to play bridge, it was announced yesterday. The session will begin January 28 and continue for eight weeks. The course will be taught by Albert A. Ostrow, bridge player and writer.—*New York Times*.

IMMIGRANT CULTURE IN A STRATIFIED ECONOMY

George Saxon

The acute problem presented by the place of the American minorities in the American economy has been pushed out of the limelight of recent years by the more desperate plight of the European homeless. But the unsalutary position of immigrant groups and their immediate descendants can be ignored only at peril of losing sight of the fundamental similarities between the two continents.

Although the problems of European and American minorities are alike rooted in economic development the concrete manifestations, which are historically conditioned, frequently differ radically and serve to obscure the common similarities. Thus it is necessary to display at all times the origins in production of social developments. That is the link which serves to unite two worlds.

Stratified Society

The "melting pot" is dead; today it melts only hopes. A profound change has taken place in American class relations since the last great wave of immigration, roughly since the first world war. Within a half century there has been a complete revolution from a society which prided itself on the relative ease with which an individual could transcend his class to one in which hierarchy is established with almost the finality of caste.

The significance of this for the immigrant is apparent at once. The great immigratory waves for a century and a half have been composed overwhelmingly of laborers. The society in which the recent immigrants now find themselves is quite different from that which antedated the first war. The Irish of the 19th century could easily

GEORGE SAXON works as a coal-loader at mines in the southern coal fields. He was the author of the article "From a Miner's Point of View," which appeared in the August, 1947, issue of *Modern Review*. This authentic piece from a man who works in the mines was one of the most generally quoted and reprinted articles that have appeared in *Modern Review*. We feel that this article on American immigrants is of a similar high calibre.

transcend class barriers but the South and East Europeans of the 20th century are indissolubly riveted to industry as manual laborers in one capacity or another.

The stratification of classes in America is nowhere better seen than in the growth of the labor union during the last decade, an organic response to the needs of a quickly hardened class which lacked the political tradition of European labor. Between 1933 and 1947 membership in unions increased five fold; seldom in history has such a gigantic movement taken place within a similar period of time. At the turn of the century the International Workers of the World dreamed of an industrial union movement encompassing a million workers; today six million belong to the CIO. The coal and auto industries are almost one hundred per cent organized, the entire labor force is dominated by the organized unions and the American labor movement is potentially the dominant force in world society.

And underlying the supra-personal political nightmares was the essential touchstone of modern history: the corrosion of the individual in mass production. The first world war ladled American industry into a Kafkian mold; to the worker a modern barbarism seemingly designed to express the dominance of machinery over man. It was the rise of mass production which furnished the powder for mass industrial unionism; it was the quality of modern industry which furnished the match. Between 1920 and 1929 phenomenal prosperity obscured the innate workings of the revolution in production only to reveal them the more surely during the ensuing collapse.

The solidification of the working class signaled by the outburst of the CIO was complemented by a metamorphosis in the character of the middle class, less dramatic (in middle class tradition), though no less significant to the immigrant. The depression marked the final destruction of the traditional small producer who today lives only an ideological life as the "backbone of the economy." Presidential committees and Congressional concern managed to produce notable elegies but little else. In place of the dodo there arose a new middle class of technicians and functionaries whose role was and is the administration of the economy, a part analogous to that played by electrician's tape around a leaky water pipe.

The ante for admission to the new middle class is much higher than that demanded by the era of small production. To become a merchant on the frontier required little more than ingenuity but to become a civil servant requires education, intimacy with those in

authority, and other attributes not commonly enjoyed by immigrants and the members of minority groups. The new middle class of today is at least caste-oid, maintaining itself by methods akin to primogeniture.

It is against this backdrop of fast hardening class lines and the tendency of modern industry that the problem of the immigrant must be viewed. All history indicates that so long as a cultural grouping can be identified with any particular place in a society the grouping remains identified as a minority and is subject to all the liabilities thereby imposed. Assimilation takes place only after a process of social osmosis which distributes individual members of the group among all strata of society. That this has not occurred as far as 20th century immigrants are concerned is evident, that it is not at all likely to occur is no less evident.

Today, 1948, it is not the lives of immigrants which are at stake but the lives of their sons and grandsons who, unable to disperse themselves into society at large, remain in the minority status of their immigrant parents.

Threshold of Assimilation

As the European capitalist revolutions reached the critical stage in country after country, progressive numbers were ejected from production to find a livelihood elsewhere. This could be accomplished slowly and blindly in the rising manufacturing industries or through emigration. Because of manifold reasons including the declining freedom of the world market, the increasing difficulty of colonial acquisitions, competition with already established capitalist nations, unfavorable trading position, and so on, the transformation of the economy from feudalism to capitalism became more and more difficult with the passage of time. Thus the agrarian eruptions of Eastern Europe in present times. Thus the peasantry of Eastern Europe found itself subject to the most decadent and exploitative conditions of a feudal regime or impelled into the birth pangs of a young industrial system in competition with an entire world.

Cromwell's yeomanry and the "Green International" of the Balkans are historically akin. The drive toward independence could find expression in neither the feudal system nor in the coming capitalist system; emigration extended hope.

To a great extent the America of broad prairies and seemingly unlimited frontier realized that hope. Until after the Civil War but little in the United States even approximated the European industrial

system. Even the celebrated cotton gin and the textile industries of New England employed but a few thousands and the system of production as a whole was much more similar to the household industry, or putting out system, of 17th century Britain than to the factory regimes which prevailed in Europe, much less modern industry. A proletariat scarcely existed.

In such a productive system not even pronounced cultural traits could long persist, or if they did, be unduly disparaged by the community as a whole. Even the dour Pennsylvania Dutch of distinctive dress and mannerisms were looked upon first as good farmers and only passingly as something else. The unity of an immigrant group attracted the attention of the populace only, as a rule, in the port cities where they were forced into a unitary mode of life.

In 19th century America the acquisition of a gun, a dog and an ax were usually a passport to first class citizenship. This was possible because of the ease with which an enterprising immigrant could make his way upward in society and become an economic or political figure of note. On the one hand classes had not solidified. On the other: the method of earning a livelihood was calculated to expand a man's self-reliance and creative ability; the rigors of the small farm and the manifold number of naturally imposed tasks demanded the ability to master all situations.

Other factors facilitated the assimilation of immigrants. The most obvious, and probably least important, was the fact that for long all citizens were not unduly removed from their European ancestry. The same condition which accounts for the long lamented "crudity" of America in regard to European fine art, that is, the absence of a class which did not need to concern itself with production and could therefore turn its attention to affairs of art, in general lowered the number of qualifications which had to be met by a member of the group. The mobility of peoples was looked upon as progressive, at least in the Western hemisphere. And finally, there was a chronic shortage of labor coupled with the fact that a premium was put on the skill of an artisan. All of this is to say that the integument of the cultural group, as created by the mode of production within the group, was porous and that assimilation was relatively easy.

In 1948 the predominance of the American economy is recognized throughout the entire world. This has been accomplished by mass production on a scale undreamed of even three decades ago. A necessary concomitant has been the demarcation of classes and the imprisonment

of human functions euphemistically called the "specialization of labor." The society of small production and individual ability is a matter of history; so is the opportunity of the immigrant to establish himself as a peer.

The threshold of cultural integration has been raised to an almost unattainable level. Immigrant groups are barred from assimilation; they are tied permanently to the working class and therefore become a special group within the working class. This has given them a homogeneity hitherto unknown in American society. As American immigrants feel the doors of integration close before them, as they look to Europe, they wonder if this is not but a prelude to a rejection of their right even to exist.

Fathers and Sons

The fulfillment of the American economy meant the evisceration of the worker in the economy and the destruction of the middle class, the stultification of the pretensions of independence (through independence) which had captured the dreams of millions. The Civil War marked a critical turning point in American history, following it the new quality of big industry dominated all of society. Momentarily it appeared, to the middle class at least, that the trusts and the corporations meant emancipation rather than death. Year after year a new Horatio Alger novel left the presses but the discrepancy between the dream and the reality became increasingly obvious.

For those immigrants who arrived at the turn of the century or later the American dream died almost still-born. The statue of liberty was at once the consummation of Escape from one form of repression and the beginning of inescapable subjection to machine production. Within two decades the wilderness had been destroyed and in its place there was a man-made wilderness of furnaces, mills and machines.

Immigrants in a society where the supply-demand schedule for labor was presumably in a state of equilibrium (which invariably means a surplus of labor) were received quite differently from those who had made their entry at a more opportune time. The exploitation of worker immigrants was raised to the level of a science, they were herded into work camps and guarded by armed men, they were shipped half way across the country and forced to work long months for "transportation"; advantage was taken of their inability to speak and understand English and their ignorance of law.

In the rapidly stratifying economy which precluded rapid assimilation

lation it became increasingly easy for vested interests to subject the immigrants to unfavorable publicity of all sorts. Immigrants who brought with them the social currents of Europe and the fermenting East (Russians, for example, who had been whirled up in the 1905 revolution) were now exposed as threats to society rather than the bearers of a new democracy; became whipping boys. The activity of the international working class which eventually erupted in the 1917 Russian Revolution made all European cultural groups suspect; the comprehension of these events evinced by the immigrants was doubly indicting.

Feared and shunned by society at large, immigrant groups drew more and more into themselves, organized their own societies, and settled in compact groups, usually around certain industries. Overwhelmed by the inhumanity of their existence the immigrants transferred their aspirations to their children and looked forward to the day when some, citizens and educated, could achieve the dreams which fathers had been forced to abandon.

But familial relationships inevitably became progressively strained as whole groups of family heads became unable to overcome the common assumption that they were social pariahs. The children of immigrants met a semi-hostile environment at school, at play and later at work.

An almost universal response to this situation developed within working class immigrant families and in one form or another was a manifestation of organic social revolt. A typical expression became the rejection on the part of the children of parental authority—a rejection which flowed in part from the immediate environment and mode of existence of the family. A shortage of material goods bordering, frequently, on real destitution permitted few luxuries, in many cases only the most rudimentary necessities, contrasted very unfavorably with all other sectors of society, even working class immigrant families which had arrived at an earlier period and had become somewhat adjusted. The appreciation of this state of affairs coupled with the daily humiliation to which the children were subjected, save only in their own milieu, was not conducive to filial respect.

The necessity to labor exacted further tolls. In many cases both parents were forced to spend long hours away from the home and the children were allowed to fend for themselves. The social atmosphere outside of the home in an industrial community failed to provide the relationship between children and nature which the frontier had ex-

pressed in so concentrated a form and owing to the contiguity of the immigrant workers' community association of cultures in play was largely prohibited. The second generation developed anarchistically, almost accidentally, frequently not knowing where or when they were born but being forced to understand that they could neither return to the standards of their parents nor be fully adopted into the new culture.

In industrial slum areas a high premium was paid on formally unsocial activity; material rewards which could not be provided at home usually accrued to those who could outfox their fellows. Parental authority was rejected except insofar as it was enforced by violence. The frustration of the parent as authority was compensated for by parental authoritarianism, sometimes seemingly sadism induced by social maladjustment. The parent who found himself unacceptable to society at large transferred his sense of revolt to repression against revolting children and further hacked away at the already crumbling family unit which seems doomed by the modern factory system.

Thus in a real sense the second generation became veritably cultural orphans, ejected from the culture of their parents and rejected by the culture toward which they were impelled. They became nihilists, cynics, but never blasé; always with a suppressed fear that personal inadequacy might lie at the bottom of their social dilemma.

While these conditions of family life had pertained in general for all waves of immigrants, the degree to which they influenced these of the 20th century was qualitatively changed by several novel factors. In the past the same conditions when operative in a different environment had at times challenged the individual and allowed migratory groups to slough off obsolete cultural accoutrements with astonishing rapidity. This can only be attributable to the porousness of society; corroboration can be seen from the negative side in the inability which some of the utopian communities whose members were European immigrants manifested in their attempts to assimilate themselves. Because of the homogeneity of their communities, they retained their own language and customs for generations until industrialization at last destroyed forever the dream of isolated communist settlements.

Notable in connection with the conception of self-identity which progressively oppressed immigrant groups was the part played by the changing character of American chauvinism. Jingoism inevitably finds different social roots and represents different political functions in changing eras. The chauvinism of the Know Nothings in the first half of the 19th century paid service to the abolitionist cause in the struggle

against the southern slave holders; that of the last half of the century was directed, by and large, against other nations pointed out as victims of imperialism, those who stood in the path of "manifest destiny," but with the rise of monopoly capitalism the feeling of nationalism began to express more and more sharply a method of attack on the working class. The trend in America was already clearly marked by the 1880's when the struggle for the 8-hour day was countered with a fierce barrage of propaganda to the effect that the movement was a tool of foreign agitators. Since then this aspect of excessive nationalism has been increasingly apparent in all industrial countries.

American provincialism fell easy prey to this sophistry; Americans have been always prone to identify their own customs with divine institutions. The immigrants as the most obvious of the working class, and almost all of them workers, were more or less easy marks, were targets into which the barbs directed at the entire labor movement fell. Following the first world war the struggle for Wilsonian democracy took root on native grounds in the macabre struggle against imaginary "reds." By almost a natural law all immigrant workers became honorary "reds."

And finally, the differential between the potential capacity of the vast American industrial machine and its real ability to fulfill the needs and desires of the laboring class, the "blades of a scissors," became wider and wider as the economy matured.

The potentiality of production springs from the potentiality of the forces of production, both human and mechanical. The high potential capacity of American productivity springs from the revolution in the productive process which has occurred during the present century, the rationalization of industry in mammoth assembly line units, and the introduction of technological improvements in semi-automatic machinery. But this rationalization of the mechanical aspect of production involved the irrationalization of labor and produced a profound effect on the immigrant who frequently was catapulted from the very concrete labor of the fields and small workshops of Southeastern Europe to the highly abstract labor of mass production in the world's most universal industry. The transition from relative producer in however limited a sense to absolute means of production was of incalculable importance in the development of the psychology of the immigrant groups. This relegation to an inferior place in the process of production coupled with an increasing inability to find the materialization of labor in terms of useful goods struck penetrating blows at the self-confidence

of the individual. In an alien society it meant that familial and all social relations became somewhat *laissez faire*.

Second Generation and Social Revolt

When the phenomenal growth of mass production industries was taking place it was well-nigh impossible to foresee the social forces which were put into operation and to judge the consequences. The AFL, the American craft union organization, was built on the aristocracy of labor and therefore offered no place to any meaningful segment of the immigrants who usually remained day laborers.

Thus in the absence of a working class organization, and in the face of a new social formation, the immigrant workers not infrequently turned their backs to a society which repulsed them and attempted to sublimate in the process of production itself their frustrated social drives. Perhaps it was this which made immigrants famed workers wherever they went, in the mines, on the railroads, in all fields of manual labor.

But all in vain. The very intensity with which the immigrants immersed themselves in production brought with it the intensive education associated with modern industry. The lesson was particularly obvious to the second generation already in adolescence, contemptuous as a matter of course of their fathers' customs and ideals. Whatever else might be, the son saw that hard labor was not the key to a meaningful social existence. And here the second generation, and those that followed, were caught in an inescapable dilemma: the futility of strivings within the working class and the inability to transcend the boundaries of the working class.

The immigrants themselves had been repulsed by society and had believed in part that the great barrier was their own inability to accommodate themselves to the new culture. Thus their failure was placed in their own minds on a personal basis. They felt that by providing their children with an opportunity to develop in the new culture, assimilation would take place with a certain amount of automaticity. It was the American dream with a delayed action fuse. Although skeptical, the second generation shared this illusion to a certain extent. It required only the experience of employment, and then, on a broad scale, the depression, to correct the misconception.

In part the routes followed by both fathers and sons led to the same psychological impasse, a conception of personal inferiority. But essentially the experiences of the second generation were more fruitful for two basic reasons; the absorption of their fathers' experiences and

the higher level of development of industry. In the first instance it was obvious that mere nativity could not guarantee acceptance in society and therefore the source of the difficulty had to be sought elsewhere. Secondly, the mass production industries increasingly demonstrated the essentials of categories flowing from class.

The attitude which the second generation took toward the process of production therefore differed from that of their fathers. As has been noted the immigrants frequently became absorbed in their work and attempted to storm the citadel of assimilation by brute force. The first generation revolted at the increasing domination of the overseers which was necessitated by the atomization of labor and were ill-trained to operate the complex machinery involved in production. Throughout the entire world workers take pride in their work and crave recognition of their ability by fellow workers. Nowhere was this so plainly discernible as with the immigrants in America. Their children too prided themselves on their ability but with the second generation it was the potentiality of ability which counted and not output itself. A process of attrition set in between the worker and his job which inevitably eventuated in lowered productivity, greater supervision and atomization.

The impossibility of attaining human goals in real life, in production and in social relations led to sublimation in the fanciful reflex world of sports, *kitch* culture, alcoholism, and gambling. Athletics, through the sports page and radio, became a mystical rite in which millions could vicariously receive the plaudits and admiration of a nation. Children and adults, men and women, literate and illiterate, became able to cite the life histories of meaningless figures in professional sports, give batting averages, argue interminably about the effect which weather conditions in California would have on the weight advantage possessed by the forward line of some football team.

To the chosen few, athletics became a road to success. Individual ability could find expression in sporting events, of the popular type, to an extent not discoverable elsewhere in society. The worker no longer dreamed of becoming a capitalist; he wanted to be a football hero. The travesty of semi-illiterate behemoths being paid fantastic stipends to attend college classes with a football snuggled securely under one arm became an awesome and formidable segment of folk culture to which the intellectual could sneer only at his peril. Multi-syllabic Eastern European surnames became the means by which great universities were identified. Popular scoffers such as Thurber waxed rich

by the presumed humor involved in compounding nonsensical combinations of letters and identifying them as Fordham football stars. For every ten thousand who became aware of a shadow Bertrand Russell (usually through reputed immorality) there would be ten million acutely aware of the diet and vital statistics of a Goldberg who could run back punts. But to become a Goldberg required only ability, to become a Russell required membership in another class.

The activity of life as a whole, usually so drab and meaningless, is tinged by the mawkish and pathetic attempt to clothe it with the romance of gaming. Figures of speech borrowed from the sporting world abound: "a full house," "four-baggers," etc. Sometimes the speech of immigrant groups is distinguished by the fluency with which athletics can be discussed. A high percentage of the Congressional Medals of Honor awarded in the second world war went to the second generation living in the Monongahela Valley of Southwestern Pennsylvania and West Virginia, a coal mining area where the degradation of modern society is epitomized in an enervating industrial complex. It is no secret to those who had the opportunity to observe these men in action that they regarded even the horrors of war as a grandiose reflection of their own environment and as such to be made palatable by the cynical vestments of athletics. Foremen in industry have discovered to their satisfaction that, although it is difficult or impossible to bribe or threaten workers into increased productivity, any sort of nominal prize which can stimulate rivalry between different groups of men frequently increases output by as much as 25 per cent.

Strident efforts are made to break the walls of society: the children of workers assume poses, attempt to emulate the supposed mannerisms of the wealthy, develop a stilted vocabulary. A senior in college, the son of a Mexican immigrant, recently announced "it is essential that I retrogress to the metropolis" when it became time for him to return to his home after a party, and it was said quite earnestly. The serious problems of life are not so much ignored as contemptuously rejected. Normative judgments and independent thought are shunned, the absence of social perspectives brings into sharp relief all personal relations; it is as though the awkwardness of adolescence were implanted permanently in an entire generation.

Cynicism becomes a fixation. The chasm between the objective place in society imposed on the child by society and the subjective desires which flow from the objective potentialities of modern industry as reflected daily in the press and theater inevitably result in twisted

psychologies. Public educational systems make but small effort to deal with the problem and in the final analysis are precluded from any meaningful attack. The desire for stability derived from crumbling family and social ties finds expression, it appears, in authoritarian religions, "eternal values," or secret societies.

The more or less common group manifestations which are noted assume importance primarily as forms of social revolt. Thus seen they serve to illuminate rather than obscure the relationship to society which the immigrant groups are likely to achieve in the next period.

Basically the tangential revolts were subsidiary to the main currents which identified the immigrant worker with the working class. In terms of abstract logic it is possible to conceive of a situation in which a group which failed to assimilate itself to a dominant culture or political system would develop a nationalist psychology demanding separation from the culture. But in America at least the development of industry almost positively precludes such an historic possibility. Workers who feel themselves responsible in large part for the continuance of the economy, as do the auto workers in Detroit, for example, recognize the necessity of changing the social structure rather than severing themselves from it.

The immigrant groups met unitary society at only one point susceptible of attack. The worker became a meaningful individual who could yield power only at the point of production and it was at the point of production, therefore, that his revolt became meaningful. As members of one of the most oppressed and vulnerable sections of the working class the immigrant groups reacted to their cultural oppression not as a distinct grouping but as the vanguard of the working class.

This took three main forms: in politics, in the labor unions, and in the labor process itself. It is well known that in the 1920's the immigrant groups furnished members for the radical organizations out of all proportion to the size of the immigrant culture. This is contrary to considerable of the history of immigrant labor which indicates that in many cases immigrants acted as conservatizing factors in the political field. The radical role of the 1920's follows in part from the increasing accumulation of experience suffered in Southeastern Europe but also must be attributed to the demand for a radical solution posed by the hardships incurred in America. At most the political heritage of Europe served as a condition for the political response to the causes found in the American scene.

The brute number of labor organizers of foreign extraction or

immediate descent attests admirably to the role played by immigrant groups in the field of organized labor. Many of the higher officers of international unions fall into these categories and the success enjoyed by them alleviates in part the social inferiority commonly felt by layers of worker immigrants. But the great contribution which these groupings made to the history of organized labor will probably never be known as their tasks were usually of the Jimmy Higgins variety, hard and anonymous work.

In the very act of production the immigrant workers, as the vanguard working class, seemingly found their metier. At times revolt in production became conscious as when Italian immigrant coal loaders solemnly cut off a part of the blade of their shovels to protest a wage reduction and at times it followed inevitably from the incapacity of stifled abilities to cope with the problems of modern industry but always it appeared to be present. The old "instinct for workmanship" which had demanded that the worker give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay was supplanted by the recognition that monetary reward and labor could not be equated in a stratified society.

The act of production progressively changed character as the mode of production altered. The division of labor and specialization of skills transformed the labor process from something at least resembling an interchange between man and nature with developed society as a mediating vehicle into a necessary form of involuntary servitude imposed by an alien force, a society which refused to accept the immigrant workers and their children in any other capacity than that of animal workers. Inevitably the result of all this was lowered productivity, carelessness, sometimes deliberate sabotage. This in turn begat increased supervision with concomitantly increased revolt, *ad infinitum*. The bureaucratization of the world began with the bureaucratization of the labor process.

Which Way?

With the fitful flames of Europe in the background and a rapid deterioration of the world economy a pressing prospect, the impediments to assimilation offered by stratification of the classes in the United States appear as sinister forebodings. The recrudescence of Fascism throughout the world gives urgency to the task of resolving the social contradictions which rend the nation. For half a century the members and descendants of the last immigrant waves have been held in a state of suspension neither accepted by the dominant culture nor

rejected en masse as an unacceptable minority destined for extermination. The crisis appears to be now approaching; the fate of the later immigrants is being posed in the question of whether society will be reorganized to permit the assimilation and self-development of immigrants and all labor or whether labor will be reorganized to an even greater subjection to the industrial process.

The eventual resolution will depend in large measure upon the activity of the immigrants themselves.

The immigrant groups have the tremendous advantage of educational experiences and of an association with production which has been more intense than that experienced by other minorities. Two great lessons have been learned. The empirical recognition of the implications of a stratified society have led through anarchistic and ferocious efforts on the part of individuals to break the walls of society to the perception that it is necessary to act in a united manner to change society. Personal adaptation is seen to be a chimera. The method is seen with relative clarity.

The incidence of attack remains somewhat obscure but the general target area of stratified classes is becoming more obvious day by day. Modern industry, the depression and the war were hard schools but they taught the immigrant groups instructive lessons concerning the relationship between the individual, the economy and the state as yet unappreciated to the same degree by other sectors of the working class.

The full consequences and implications have not as yet been drawn and understood largely because the objective situation has not as yet forced in action a logical continuation of the process long ago begun. The absence of political tradition and ideological expression in America have obscured the profound movements taking place in immigrant circles. As always the expression lags far behind the empirical perception and the quality of the perceptions are therefore much more profound than is customarily believed.

GREAT DAY

More than half a million persons have inspected the museum (Stalin's birthplace in the Caucasus Mountains of Georgia, known as "the little house in Gori") in the eight years of its existence. The visitors' book—a huge volume bound in red leather with gold lettering—contains thousands of entries.

"This was a day of great happiness for me," wrote Soviet Army man Ivan Shapolval. "I visited the house where the great Stalin was born. For me it was the most solemn day in my life. The whole atmosphere testifies that our leader is bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the people. Stalin is great, just as our people are."—*USSR Information Bulletin*.

WHAT CAN PROPAGANDA DO?

Herman Singer

It may be necessary to ascribe to Hitler the misdemeanor of having brought into being an American school of propaganda experts. Although these students of propaganda were in operation soon after the end of the First World War, their real activity did not begin until the Nazi propaganda output made it essential that Goebbels' Ministry of Words be undermined by Allied counter-propaganda. War-born and war-influenced, America's propaganda experts now include those social scientists who advocate blanketing the whole world with their version of world affairs, and more restrained scholars who have used the tools of psychiatry, philosophy and social psychology to understand this modern phenomenon and its users.

Three major groups of propaganda analysts have emerged on the American scene, and each has addressed itself to such questions as what makes propaganda effective, how does it change people's minds and behavior and even—though rarely—is it “good” or “bad” for society and the people subjected to it.

The work of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis is probably the most widely-known to the general public. Founded in October, 1937, the Institute, whose executive directors were first Professor Clyde Miller of Columbia University and then Professor Alfred McClung Lee of Wayne University, ceased operation a month after America's entrance into the Second World War. This fact has a certain symbolic significance. For the Institute's approach resembled closely that of the generals who prepared to fight World War II with the weapons of World War I.

The aim of the Institute was to provide the man in the street with the facility for warding off contradictory propaganda thrusts, and its bulletin, *Propaganda Analysis*, undertook to analyze current events in terms of the Institute's methods and terminology, and also provided background studies of the channels of communication.

The Institute defined propaganda as “an expression of opinion or

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action by individuals or groups deliberately designed to influence public opinion or actions of other individuals or groups with reference to pre-determined ends." In a recently written summary of the Institute's work, Professor Lee says that propaganda is ever-present in society, and seems to imply that propaganda analysis is therefore the equivalent of an analysis of society. This approach to propaganda was well illustrated in the Institute's periodical.

Propaganda Analysis specialized in exposés, and occasionally bore a close resemblance to *In Fact*. In its four years of publication, it presented studies of the propaganda emerging from the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, the Munich sell-out, the activities of the Associated Farmers, the Communist Party, the outbreak of the Second World War, Hess' flight to England, and other events. *Propaganda Analysis* made no attempt to measure the actual effect of the propaganda being analyzed. It accepted as given the thesis that propaganda was effective until analyzed, when it apparently collapsed from sheer exposure. *Propaganda Analysis* gave the impression that the propaganda of Hitler, Franco, Coughlin, the British, and the Communist Party all had the same value. Put through the mechanical wringer of name-calling, glittering generality, and the other verbal devices invented by the Institute, everything emerged on a flat plane of equality. The effect of the analyses issued by the Institute was to enforce the general view, prevalent after the First World War, that it was susceptibility to propaganda that was responsible for such historical events as America's entrance into the war, or the victory of Fascism, and that resistance to propaganda could prevent similar catastrophes. The Institute thus played a significant part in sustaining the attitude of general skepticism about all propaganda, while it simultaneously over-emphasized the power of propaganda to perform as potently as its exponents said it could.

Although the Institute was apparently eager to give a full account of the propagandist and his setting, the performance rarely matched the promise. The *Propaganda Analysis* editors soon began to specialize in indicating the intent of the propagandist, and describing the tricks he employed to achieve his ends. In the end, the major contribution of the Institute was to give titles to various propaganda devices.

II

Other propaganda analysts have not aimed their work primarily at the layman, and, not attempting to cover as much ground as the Institute, have developed more technical tools for the analysis of propaganda.

The most noted propaganda theorist in America, and one who is generally recognized as the social scientist who has broken the most ground in the field is Professor Harold D. Lasswell. Author of the article on propaganda in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, as well as a number of books on propaganda, Professor Lasswell has influenced most of the propaganda research in America. He wrote *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (1927), *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* (1935), *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (1936), (with Dorothy Blumenstock) *World Revolutionary Propaganda* (1939), and, with Bruce Lannes Smith and Ralph D. Casey, edited *Propaganda, Communication and Public Opinion*, a reference guide to propaganda, publicity, and public relations published by the Princeton University Press in 1946, a continuation of an earlier bibliography published in 1935. Professor Lasswell was also a member of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, and headed the Experimental Division for the Study of Wartime Communication, which elaborated various techniques of "content analysis," Professor Lasswell's major contribution to the study of propaganda.

In *World Revolutionary Propaganda*, a study of Communist Party activity in Chicago during the depression years, and his major work employing content analysis, Professor Lasswell distinguishes propaganda from education as follows: "Propaganda is the manipulation of symbols (and other means) to transmit acceptable attitudes (and skills)." The emphasis on symbols is the key element in the definition, and animates the work of Professor Lasswell and his associates in their application of content analysis.

Basic to content analysis, too, is a second concept of Professor Lasswell: that of indulgence and deprivation. This concept has a double meaning. It refers to situations which may dispose persons to accept the values of the *status quo* as good (indulgence), or which may cause persons to undergo discomfort or uneasiness regarding changing norms (deprivation). In another sense, these terms refer to the effect produced by the propagandist: if the recipient considers the propaganda benignly, he is indulgent toward it; if the propaganda ruffles the recipient, its effect is deprivational.

In content analysis, key words, phrases or themes are isolated in a piece of propaganda as having major significance. Analysts then note how many times the symbols occur, and whether their use yields favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward the symbol on the part of the recipient. On the basis of the statistical data an attempt is made to

analyze the aims and approach of the propagandist, and infer something about the effect of the propaganda on the audience.

As to determining the effect of the communication, Professor Lasswell, in *Propaganda, Communication and Public Opinion*, favors all the devices by which the "five features of response—attention, comprehension, enjoyment, evaluation, action"—can be studied. These methods may include ballots, interviews, observation of spectators, the use of participant-observers, the use of panel interviews, and pre-testing. More important than all these however, according to Professor Lasswell, are the actual results of the propaganda: "The most crucial inquiries relate to the impact of content on action, the terminal phase of every completed sequence of communication. Representative indexes of such final effect are votes, sales, gifts, enlistments, and attendance." In short, the record of success or failure indicates its success or failure.

Professor Lasswell's own most ambitious contribution to his science is reported in *World Revolutionary Propaganda*. This study is an analysis of Communist Party propaganda in Chicago in the years 1930-34. The greater part of the survey is given over to a detailed description of how the Communist Party attempted to exploit the depression in its propaganda and activities—through demonstrations, newspapers, bulletins, leaflets, front groups. Through these channels were distributed slogans and symbols aimed at selling the current Communist Party line.

After analyzing the themes used in the day-to-day activities of the Communist Party, Professor Lasswell arrived at the following conclusions:

This case study of Communist propaganda in Chicago has demonstrated the strength of restrictive factors which prevent the universalizing of the U.S.S.R. Despite some favorable circumstances Communist propaganda was blocked by American nationalism and thus contributed more to the catharsis of insecurities than to the readjustment of American symbols and practices. . . . The chief role of Communist propaganda was to crystallize the conflicts between diffusion and restriction tendencies in relation to the Russian center of the latest wave of world revolution. . . .

As used by Professor Lasswell, who is partial to his own semantic inventions, "diffusion" means the acceptance of Communist propaganda regarding a world system, and "restriction" means the "intensification of old patterns," that is, rallying to the defense of the *status quo* against the challenge of the Communist idea.

Professor Lasswell's one clear-cut conclusion as to the effects of the propaganda—that it actually set up defense reactions among those

who were affected by it—is substantiated only by quotations from case workers' reports, which indicated that some Communist Party leaders, drawn from middle or lower income groups whose security was sharply undermined by the depression, remained "restrictive" (patriotic) in their basic loyalties.

Given the situation, however—mass unemployment in America and the existence of "full employment" in Russia—there would seem to be some ground for believing that there was a more radical shift in basic attitudes—regardless of the activities of the Communist Party—than Professor Lasswell indicates. The support that Communists gained among leading American intellectuals during the period, the agitation on the campus—one of the few periods when anything at all was astir among American college students—the rapid proliferation of Communist Party fronts, the acceptance of the Communist Party line as the touchstone of radicalism—these were some of the immediate effects of the depression. Even if Americans were repelled by the crudity of the Communist attacks on American institutions, one of the consequences of the depression was to instill suspicion regarding the stability of American capitalism. Implanted in a large segment of America's intellectuals too was the belief that planning was good, and that Russia was showing the way toward a depression-less economy.

Content analysis, by placing major emphasis on the symbols manipulated by the Communist Party during the depression, shifts attention to what was a secondary phenomenon. It is hard to believe that the great depression did not cause a significant shift in values, but neither Professor Lasswell nor his technique seemed ready to chart that change in *World Revolutionary Propaganda*. This is probably due to the fact that there is basic in Professor Lasswell's system the assumption that existing symbols are "indulgent" (good), and that any criticism of them is "deprivational," and consequently will not be acceptable to the audience. There is little room in content analysis for evaluating or questioning the validity of "deep-seated beliefs," or even for discovering what will change them.

Professor Lasswell, in leaping so quickly into quantitative analysis, has failed to consider some fundamental problems. What is the historical derivation of any given set of symbols? What social and political function do they serve at any given time? How deep-seated are they, actually? What effect do opposing symbols (propaganda, in Professor Lasswell's sense) have on those who are exposed to them? Is the manipulation of symbols the real key to change in outlook or attitude among large groups of people?

Such crucial questions receive only brief treatment by Professor Lasswell, and it is difficult to see how content analysis as such can contribute toward answering them in any adequate fashion. The emphasis of content analysis is a narrow one. It has been concerned mainly with finding a short-hand method of indicating what the propagandist is trying to do, and to this end has brought into play statistical and semantic methods. This technique has been most useful to the propagandist himself, showing him the kind of treatment to which he subjects various symbols, often without knowing exactly what he has done. If the work of the Institute of Propaganda Analysis was strongly oriented to an "exposure" of propaganda for the benefit of the duped masses, that of Professor Lasswell and his associates has been largely oriented to the propagandist and describing his symbolic output. Their studies have generally failed to reveal the secrets to which their titles lay claim.

III

Professors Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, of the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University, while accepting some of the analytical tools of Professor Lasswell, have attempted in their work to extend the value of content analysis, and in particular to determine more precisely the effects on the recipient of a propaganda document or campaign. Although the sphere of their studies has been limited to date to small groups or restricted areas, they have exploited their material conscientiously.

Their definition of propaganda is essentially the same as Professor Lasswell's: "We understand by propaganda any and all sets of symbols which influence public opinion, belief or action on issues regarded by the community as controversial." ("Studies in Radio and Film Propaganda," *Transactions of the New York Academy of Science*, December, 1943.)

To test the response to a given propaganda document, Professor Merton has developed what he terms the focused interview. An experienced interviewer suggests lines of thought to a respondent regarding the effect of a specific propaganda piece. An attempt is made to encourage the respondent to express himself freely on all aspects of the propaganda to which he has been exposed. The interviewer tries to single out the most vivid reactions of the interviewee. The entire interview is recorded verbatim by steno-typists.

The focused interview can be used as a form of pre-testing of propaganda material, so familiar to the market research analysts. Its purpose is to eliminate the "kinks" or "bugs" in a propaganda docu-

ment. If the interviewee shows that he misinterpreted the propaganda or has derived different notions from it than anticipated, the document is edited to remedy these defects.

It is of some importance to consider that the longest section of the paper by Professor Lazarsfeld and Merton, which was delivered before the Writers Congress in Hollywood, in October, 1943, deals with just such failures on the part of the recipient to understand the aim of the propaganda.

In one example, Professors Merton and Lazarsfeld describe the reaction to a pamphlet issued during the war which warned of the deprivations likely to occur among Negroes following a victory for the Nazis. According to the authors, the pamphlet was a failure because the Negro population prefers pictures to text, and the pictures in this pamphlet "neglected the theme of Negro losses in the event of a Nazi victory."

The authors then make the observation that, under certain conditions, the propagandist gets the opposite effect from the one desired.

It is surprising that, in an era when the Negro problem has become one of the standard themes of fiction, Professors Merton and Lazarsfeld failed to consider the possibility that *any* propaganda aimed at reconciling the Negro and the war would have been unsuccessful. Not only was there lack of support for the war among Negroes, but studies were made in various areas to determine the extent of pro-Japanese feeling among Negroes. How, under these circumstances, can the authors dismiss the Negro pamphlet as simply a technical failure? The case of the Negro pamphlet illustrates one of the things that propaganda cannot do, and explains why the undertone of skepticism regarding all propaganda is not likely to subside.

One must consider the possibility that the propagandist, because of his aim of moving masses of people, cannot be primarily interested in facts. Where, for example, the consideration is one of obtaining the greatest possible unity—as in wartime—there is apparently an irrepressible tendency to make the last recalcitrant segment of the population participate in that unity, whatever the cost to facts. A wartime environment leads to insistence that "disunity" be kept to a minimum, and it then becomes the function of propaganda to blanket those strains and tensions which might affect the prosecution of the war.

IV

A sharper realization of this conflict is indicated in Professor Merton's recently-published study, *Mass Persuasion: The Social Psy-*

chology of a War Bond Drive (Harper, New York, 1946). In this study, which makes effective use of the focused interview, Professor Merton reports on the momentous marathon—an eighteen-hour radio war-bond drive—undertaken by Kate Smith in September, 1943.

From 8 A.M. to 2 o'clock the following morning, Miss Smith made sixty-five appeals, each lasting one to two minutes. She played on the emotions of her audience by constantly holding up the picture of boys fighting in foxholes, while radio listeners were required only to buy bonds, preferably at that very moment, by calling the proper number.

The effect of this approach, as Professor Merton learned from his interviewers, was a morbid interest in whether Miss Smith could hold out for eighteen hours. There was no questioning the success of the experiment, for when Miss Smith stopped, \$39,000,000 in war bonds had been sold. This campaign was in effect a merciless invasion of the emotions of the listeners. Listeners were browbeaten by Miss Smith's heroism and martyrdom in staying on the air, and there was an explicit challenge to match her courage.

From the viewpoint of manipulation of symbols, Miss Smith's script writers showed great ingenuity. The impact on recipients was breathtaking—bonds were purchased in tremendous numbers. Miss Smith employed every device listed by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, and fulfilled every requirement for success discovered by Professor Lasswell.

In his summary chapter, Professor Merton decries the necessity of the use of such tactics as the Smith marathon. He calls on radio script writers to reject the use of appeals to sentiment to the "exclusion of pertinent information." In addition, as has become commonplace since the publication of Robert K. Lynd's *Knowledge for What?* Professor Merton asserts that the social scientists, in dealing with such data as assembled in *Mass Persuasion*, must raise the moral issue as to whether "a society subjected ceaselessly to a flow of 'effective' half-truths and the exploitation of mass anxieties may all the sooner lose that mutuality of confidence and reciprocal trust so essential to a stable social structure."

But Professor Merton's rejection of the Smith broadcast is vitiated by his criticism. Miss Smith failed to mention, at any time during her marathon, that buying bonds constituted a method of heading off inflation. She avoided almost entirely any economic implications and stuck closely to her emotional entreaties, Professor Merton complains.

Here, as in the case of his discussion of the pamphlet on Negroes, Professor Merton skirts the edge of basic criticism. In the Smith inci-

dent, Professor Merton apparently felt that, however degrading the effect of the episode, the injection of a bit of educational propaganda might have tipped the scales in favor of the marathon. Similarly, he felt that, with some editorial tinkering, the pamphlet on Negroes and the war might have been successful. In neither case did Professor Merton consider the suggestion that the war environment itself was responsible for his own uneasiness regarding the techniques employed.

One of the more obvious comments about the Second World War was that it failed to arouse any degree of emotional awareness among those who were called upon to fight it. And American war propaganda was equally spiritless. Given such a situation, all war propaganda had to be defective morally and somewhat ineffectual technically. To note these failures without making any additional comment on the war itself, and the reasons why it produced distorted and degrading propaganda is one of the failures of American social science, even when it raises—as Professor Merton does—moral issues.

Professors Merton and Lazarsfeld conclude their "Studies in Radio and Film Propaganda" by saying that "Propaganda is no substitute for social policy and social action, but it can serve to rest both policy and action in the understanding of the people." But if social policy and social action are rooted in the people, propaganda is either unnecessary, or flows so inevitably out of the relationship between people and policy that it has the attributes of the self-evident.

The evidence that propaganda arises out of the *disparity* between people and policy is seen in the widespread rejection of propaganda, which requires the sophisticated propagandist to "pre-test" his copy. While such pre-testing may serve to iron out an occasional technical wrinkle, it does not guarantee that the propaganda will be any more acceptable to wide masses of the people. Observers in Nazi Germany repeatedly noted that audiences developed "listener's ear" to the blast of propaganda, and in Russia it is known that the content of *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, and their counterparts throughout the country, is similarly discounted.

Even the rapid elimination of technical mistakes from the propaganda document does not suffice to make its acceptance more likely. All the time and money that Hitler poured into propaganda failed to make Nazism a crusade among the German people, and Allied propaganda in Germany today is likewise failing to sell democracy because, according to a *New York Herald-Tribune* dispatch from Frankfurt, "democracy marches on its stomach."

Propaganda research has not considered the rejection of propa-

ganda and what it means. A study made for the Bureau of Applied Social Research by Professor Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet (*The People's Choice. How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, New York, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1944) found that voters in Erie County, Ohio, were hardly affected by the 1940 Presidential campaign.

The authors say: "Campaign propaganda activated people by bringing their latent political attitudes to the surface of recognition and expression . . . some people were converted by campaign propaganda, but they were very few indeed."

In a more limited sphere, Eunice Cooper and Marie Jahoda of the Department of Scientific Research of the American Jewish Committee found after a number of studies that propaganda aimed at undermining prejudice among the bigoted was met by evasion on the part of the recipients.

Respondents were exposed to a number of cartoons satirizing or ridiculing a "Mr. Biggott." It was discovered that the respondent, sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously, failed to apply the moral of the cartoon to himself. Prejudiced persons apparently felt that such attacks on their beliefs would upset their emotional balance, and therefore found various means of evading the meaning of the cartoons.

The evidence in this study is probably the most significant in pointing to the limits of propaganda effectiveness. A campaign aimed at rooting out prejudice, worthwhile on every count, met unconscious evasion by the prejudiced. The psychological motivation of this rejection can perhaps be explained as follows: they felt that yielding their bias would mean facing the community and their circle as outcasts, and running counter to the mores of their group. They could not change until the situation in which they found themselves was changed.

V

From a technical point of view, American propaganda experts have made a number of tangible contributions toward analyzing the output of the propagandists. Following the lead of the semanticists and logical positivists, they have set up categories for describing the devices employed by the propagandist, and for analyzing his manipulation of symbols. They have also devised some means of determining the effect of propaganda on the recipient.

They have, in addition, introduced some of the findings of other social sciences into the treatment of propaganda, and have partially succeeded in taking propaganda analysis and research out of the hands

of the public relations counselors and professors of advertising who have, since the First World War, accepted their own theory that the aim of the propagandist had only to be announced to be achieved.

But there have been many serious gaps in the work of the American propaganda experts. Disregarding their own pretensions to being disinterested social scientists, they have been quick to offer their services to the radio industry and to the war propagandists, ready to test the effectiveness of propaganda, and to advise on its improvement. This eagerness to "survey" has resulted in a meagerness of theory. There has been little in the way of broad conclusions regarding the practice or effect of propaganda, and no hypothesis of major significance has emerged from the work of the propaganda experts.

Even more hesitant has been their approach to the American scene, the social setting of propaganda. There have been no studies which attempt to place propaganda in its role within the framework of American capitalist society, and more attention has been paid to Hitler's propaganda apparatus and its operation in Nazi Germany than to the various strains of propaganda in the United States. The analysts have tended to emphasize the work of the propagandist rather than the situation which gives rise to him. They have been taken in by their own concern with manipulative processes, and have felt that the wielding of symbols has a primary value in changing mass attitudes. In short, what is really a symptom of social conflict and a clue to social processes, has often been taken as the main social reality.

The resistance to propaganda has not received an adequate evaluation from the propaganda experts. They have failed to raise the question as to whether propaganda is a kind of extraneous force in society, arising out of the tensions, fears, and inequalities which are not being appeased in any other way. The widespread suspicion aroused by propaganda, it would seem, has its base in the feeling that an attempt is being made to maneuver men into action for ends which are not always clear to them. Propaganda thus plays a part in contributing toward that breakdown of direct communication between men which has become characteristic of our age.

The social scientists, if they are really interested in drawing moral conclusions, will have to raise the issue as to whether propaganda—even of the "good" variety—is socially desirable. For the use of propaganda may vary in inverse proportion to the degree to which society reflects understanding, cooperation, and mutual trust, and the manipulation of either symbols or men should have no place in a society where freedom and equality reign.

REPORTS

MEN AND TIN; THE BOLIVIAN MINER

Remberto Capriles Rico and Gaston Arduz Eguia

EDITOR'S NOTE: For many years Bolivia has been one of the principal tin-producing regions of the world. During the recent war, when the resources of Malaya and Indonesia were cut off from the Allied world, the metallic resources of the extensive inland South American republic became of prime importance. During this period favorable contracts were negotiated by the U. S. Government with the Republic of Bolivia, covering purchase and other conditions surrounding the sale of Bolivian tin to the Allied nations. Some attempt was made on the part of the U. S.—due primarily to forward-looking members of the Board of Economic Welfare and the office of Inter-American Affairs—to have at least some advantages of these contracts seep down to the miners.

During the war, the social problem in the tin mines came to the fore. In December 1942 the famous "Catavi massacre" occurred in which a number of striking tin miners were killed in machine-gun fire by police. Subsequently, at the request of the Bolivian Ambassador to the United States, a joint commission was appointed by the two governments to investigate living and working conditions in the mine areas. The report of this body is a publication of the International Labor Office under the title, "Labor Problems in Bolivia." Later, Bernardo Ibañez of the Chilean Confederacion de Trabajadores de Chile also made an investigation in the name of both U. S. labor organizations and the CTAL. Ultimately, the "Catavi massacre" was a factor in bringing about the downfall of the Panaranda government and the capture of power by Colonel Villaroel, with a mixed support which was in part military and ultra-nationist, and in part genuinely liberal. Mr. Capriles and Mr. Arduz were of the latter group during the early period of the regime.

The Villaroel Government made it possible for the tin miners to organize effectively for the first time. The new unions received government support and came under control of the pro-Villaroel Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario. The M.N.R. union leaders have remained in the saddle despite the violent overthrowing of the Villarroel regime. Under their leadership, the Federacion Minera remains the most powerful labor

In and out of various governments, REMBERTO CAPRILES RICO and GASTON ARDUZ EGUIA have been identified for the past ten years with efforts to relieve the poverty of the Bolivian worker. While respectively Under-Secretary of Labor and Director-General of Social Investigations in the government of General Penaranda, they spent the summer of 1943 in the United States, studying administration of labor and social security legislation.

organization in the country today, and perhaps one of the most crucial groups in all South America.

Nevertheless, in September of this year, all workers at the Catavi mine were discharged, with government sanction, in an admitted effort to eliminate union leaders and "trouble-makers." The majority were then re-hired on a different (contract-wage) basis.

The mining camps are reported to have been swept by a violent form of xenophobia in which hatred of the white man is rampant. So critical has the situation become that many North American and European mining technicians and their families have left the region. There have been several "incidents" in which foreigners have been killed. Some mining companies, meanwhile, operating on a narrow margin of profit as a result of increased labor costs and progressively poorer ore, are said to be contemplating suspension of operations until the situation "normalizes" itself.

The San Jose mine of the Hochchild group did close in the summer, whereupon the workers took over and for three days held possession. The mine was then re-opened by the government and has since been operated with the workers rated as government employees and therefore not entitled to the social benefits legally required from private industry.

In this carefully-documented selection from their book, *The Social Problem of Bolivia*, published in La Paz in 1941, the authors draw a graphic picture of some of the basic social conditions and ways of life in the mining camps which underlie present and past waves of resentment and violence.

Living conditions for the Bolivian miners and their families have doubtless improved somewhat in the past twenty years, as much because of better social legislation as because management has recognized the decisive influence which they play in the productive capacity of the workers. Nevertheless it is clear that the manner of life for the general mining population is still lower certainly than in manufacturing or even in small industry; this, combined with the painful labor of the mines and the rigor of life in the mountains introduces for Bolivia an element which is particularly serious in the total problem of social welfare. Without exaggeration of the dismal note, it can be said today that the mineworkers of the country are being biologically pauperized to an increasing degree, so that generations will be born organically weak and afflicted with a declining capacity for effort.

Although the foregoing generalization is not modified thereby, it is of course true that the quality of living varies measurably for their employees from one company to another, according to their respective economic positions.¹ Life for employees of the Patino mines in Catavi and

¹ Profits of the mining companies vary according to the size of invested capital, the kind of mineral exploited, and the richness of the deposits. The Patino mines at Catavi work with tin-bearing ore of 3.5 percent and their total production is the highest for the country. Mines of the *Compania Minera de Oruro*, of the Rochschild group, are easily worked with small capital investment. The *Huanchaca de Bolivia* company of the Rochschild group works only in zinc, lead and copper metals, quoted at relatively low prices. The silver ore assays at barely 32 ounces. The *Compania Aramaya de Minas en Bolivia* works tin ore assayed at 4 percent and in silver veins which assay at 160 ounces. In the tin mines of Opaica and Oruro, ores of 1.5 and 2 percent are worked.

the *Compania Aramayo de Mines en Bolivia* at Quechisla is considerably better—especially in respect to housing, hygiene and health—than in the smaller developments or even in other larger mining enterprises of the Republic. Such distinctions will be considered hereafter in some detail.

Food within reach of most miners' families is not only insufficient for a laborer—it is not even the minimum ration for sedentary life. It does not approximate even remotely a nutritive diet suited to the conditions of this kind of labor and the exigencies of climate and altitude; it is deficient in quantity and quality in precisely the most important elements: fats, proteins and vitamins. Vegetables and fruits are wholly lacking; the amount of fats is small, and proteins are below the requirement for bodily repair.

HOUSING AND HYGIENE

Housing varies greatly from one area to another. In very few instances does it meet minimum hygienic standards. The rule is cramped dwellings, poor, sordid, unhealthful—miserable huts through whose broken walls thrust the cold and wind of the mountains. Even the relatively better shelters usually lack windows, floor or bed—to say nothing of electric lights or running water. The family is usually crowded into one room which serves as living-room, dining-room, bedrooms, kitchen and stable. Promiscuity is appalling since these single-room repositories of household utensils, odds and ends of furniture and refuse are often inhabited by two or more families and their domestic animals. In Catavi, Lllallagua and Siglo Veinte, workers' homes consist of two rooms and kitchen with electric light and community provision for drinking water. But these conditions are exceptional.

In respect to clothing, the miner and his family usually lack the outer garments needed in the mountain climate. If at times they appear clad with some decency, this is also the exception rather than the rule. The habitual spectacle is one of poverty-stricken people, dirty, ragged and often well-nigh naked. These are the physical conditions which characterize the miner's life; add to them his state of ignorance and total unfamiliarity with habits of cleanliness and the picture is complete. Of concern on the part of the mining companies for health and hygiene, there is none, except in the large operations, and even there it is reduced to care of open pathological conditions.

SCHOOLS AND RECREATION

Schools—when they exist at all—are inadequate and poor. In communities where there are more than thirty children, the companies comply with the legal obligation to maintain primary schools at their own expense; but these schools function badly, being ill-equipped and usually lacking suitable teachers. The mine owners cannot be blamed for the latter, since the National School for Teachers scarcely provides graduates sufficient to keep the public schools open. Moreover, most of the mining communities have fewer than thirty children of the required age, and there are no public schools in or near such places.

In any recital of the way he lives, the worker's opportunities for

honest, useful and agreeable investment of his leisure must be touched upon. Such opportunities are few or non-existent. In the large mining centers such as Catavi, Quechisla or Pulacayo, athletic fields for football, basketball and *Jai-alai* are to be found and also halls for showing motion pictures; elsewhere practically nothing. Nowhere are there libraries suitable to a majority of the mining population. The workers do not own radios—the cheapest is far beyond their reach; neither do the companies provide loudspeakers for community broadcasts. And it should be borne in mind that here—at twelve to sixteen thousand feet above sea level—the rigorous landscape, the sterile earth, the cold air are no invitation to outdoor excursions. Imagine how monotonous and desolate is the miner's life, lived wholly between the exhausting labor of the gallery and the dismal, poor, forbidding hut!

Thus he turns to alcohol, which absorbs much of his wage, eats up his savings, cuts away his compensation for illness or accident. Contrary to common opinion, the Bolivian miner, properly speaking, is not an alcoholic. He does not drink habitually and daily; he does from time to time revolt in clamorous orgies which are followed by prolonged periods of abstinence; that is, he seeks and finds in alcohol a parenthesis of animation in the routine of his life. And no prohibition of liquor in the mining camps can be fruitful if it does not embrace some intelligently directed stimulus to education, the creation of moderate and profitable diversions, the improvement of living conditions, and encouragement of the worker's impulses toward comfort and well-being.

WAGES

What are the reasons for a life so impoverished? The immediate reason is the extremely low wage. Bolivian manpower is that of an undeveloped, exploited country, and is paid as such. Foreign engineers who know the Bolivian miner calculate his average production as equal to two-thirds that of a North American or European worker, with the added circumstance that only Indian laborers can undertake certain tasks, especially those on the lowest levels of the mines. But the average wage of a Bolivian miner is scarcely one-fourth the minimum paid to the North American or European. A considerable percentage of miners in Bolivia receive wages below—far below—the amount necessary to sustain a minimum subsistence level. For the most part the wage does not even remotely permit support of a family in decency and health.

Average daily earnings vary from 13 to 17 *bolivianos*;² this may be augmented by housing, and supplies at a price reduction of thirty percent, although such benefits are not available except at the largest mines. Calculating on the usual family base of five persons, and even supposing

² The average value of the *boliviano* for 1940-41 in US currency was a fraction over 2 cents. In 1941 such a daily wage would buy in the company store a llama-load of wood, a can of condensed milk, two pounds of carbide for a miner's lamp, a bar of soap and a pound each of lard, sugar, meat, rice, and rolled oats. Three or four days' work would pay for one pair of men's shoes. Current data from the mine areas are lacking, but the inflationary rise in the cost-of-living has been greater in Bolivia than in any other Latin-American country, while for unskilled and semi-skilled mine labor there have been only slight wage increases.

that one or more of them contribute to the family with supplementary wages, it is clear that the income is wholly insufficient for a tolerable life. Even among salaried employees, much more highly-favored than wage-laborers, few enjoy adequate incomes, though a minority are very highly paid.

Subordinate factors which contribute to this low level of existence are the ignorance and the traditional customs of the worker, who is commonly improvident of the future; knows nothing of the elements of proper living; and seldom devotes any part of his wage to improvement of his life or that of his family, preferring rather to satisfy his vices. In the mining camps, expenditures for alcohol and coca equal a high percentage of total wages paid. The addiction to chewing coca leaves which provide artificial stimulation is an evident consequence of a diet which cannot be converted into the energy required for exhausting labor.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Provision for industrial hygiene and safety varies considerably from one mine to another; almost totally lacking in small and medium workings, they remain seriously deficient in large operations. Such safeguards as exist are almost exclusively voluntary on the part of the companies; governmental inspection services are not technically qualified to exercise such control. In the entire country there are no doctors trained in industrial hygiene, nor are there safety engineers. Such lack of health and safety standards explains the rising statistical curve for occupational disease and accident as reflected in compensation records. Human resources are stupidly wasted, the quality and quantity of labor reduced—and this in a country of low population, where lack of manpower remains one of the gravest obstacles to industrialization.

The spread of tuberculosis in the country has paralleled the development of mining as an industry. How could it be otherwise, if to the manner of life which we have described is joined the character of labor in the mines? Generally speaking, the Indian worker by virtue of his low standard of living and a lack of prior contact with the disease is a magnificent target for infection. Working in the fields he is protected from contamination by the natural forces of climate, altitude, and intense solar radiation. But when he shifts to industrial labor or even to a region of tubercular infection, he speedily falls a victim.

To conditions of life and labor, then, must be attributed the terrible conquest by tuberculosis of those who dwell near the mines, on the plateau and in the surrounding valleys. The environment in which the Bolivian poor live is inevitably favorable to its development.

CHILD MORTALITY

In all industrial and agricultural centers of Bolivia the rate of infantile disease and mortality is extraordinarily high, but in the mining regions the problem of infant health is literally terrifying.

And why shouldn't the miners' children die? In the womb the child

is scarred by the stigmata of misery and disease, entering the world marked before birth by the crushing imprint on its parents of brutal labor and life of deprivation and pain." And when he comes forth, there, ready to annihilate him, is the rough onslaught of cold—grim, implacable, hostile, and more dangerous to white or half-breed child, since the Indian's accommodation to the climate is, one might say, ancestral. He must be washed in cold water and in the icy air of the mountains. Often he wears no garments, or only a twist of damp, foul rag. And the lodging of this child, if not a cave broken from the rock, is a jumbled hut, a dirty, badly ventilated, murky accumulation of human beings, animals and objects of every kind. He must follow his mother when she goes to sort ore at the mine, there to stay hour after hour unsheltered from the weather; or he must remain with strangers while she works; or, more simply, he is just abandoned anywhere.

His mother's milk is polluted by poverty, physical and moral—by poor food and the use of liquor. But without it he is still worse off, for cows' or goats' milk is scarce and dear in these parts, and a proletarian family cannot pay what it costs. Condensed milk is often used, but ignorantly, in foolish and dangerous ways. And to all this—poor heredity, poor food, poor housing, poor clothing—are added ignorance and vice of his parents as further adversaries.

What kind of rearing can he have from these misery-haunted people who know nothing of hygiene, of bringing up children, of education? Their orgies are many, and each means drunkenness for the child as well as all kinds of abuse, so he often dies by the careless, or wilful, act of his parents.

This child, rachitic and delicate from birth, soon falls prey to all the diseases; chief among them are tuberculosis, syphilis, infantile cholera, bronchitis, whooping-cough, measles, parasites, skin infections. If he does not die young, he lives deformed and ugly, goes soon to work, and is borne to the grave before he is thirty.

Few people are disturbed by all this. As a symptom of the curious tranquility, one might cite the fact that even in Bolivia's largest cities there is not one children's hospital; the inferior institution in Cochabamba is due to private efforts; Oruro has none, notwithstanding that it is a large mining center; nor has Potosi, the city which from Colonial days has borne a sinister distinction for the death-rate among its children; only Sucre has a children's "pavilion."

The Bolivian mining population is a legion well on its way to exhaustion. Misery, alcohol, coca, occupational disease, tuberculosis and children's maladies continuously sap its strength and energy. The worker's productive power gradually decreases; and as the ranks, depleted by industrial casualties and tuberculosis, are not replenished by robust stock, the human capital of the mining industry constantly dwindles.

[*Translated by BARBARA McLONEY*]

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

A UNITED STATES OF EUROPE?

Widespread discussion of the Marshall Plan (or European Recovery Program as it is now called) has stimulated a keen interest in Europe recently for various proposals for a loose or closely-knit European federation. Our international press review this month is devoted primarily to articles concerning this vital topic.

The London *Economist* for December 6, 1947 ends a long article entitled "Britain in Europe" as follows:

No dreams of an "English-speaking association" will alter the fact that the British Isles are on the wrong side of the Atlantic.

Economically, the sixteen sovereignties of 1938 are already an anachronism, and since it now seems almost certain that a separated Western Germany must somehow be absorbed in Western Europe, the need for a wider economic integration is immediate. British fears that the creation of a wider market might expose their industrial structure to difficult competition is in reality an argument for precisely that policy, for if Britain is to maintain its position as an exporter, it is common knowledge that something must be done to reverse the mounting trend of its costs of production. Another decade of economic protectionism may reduce Britain to a position in which overcostly British goods can no longer find foreign markets, and then of what assistance will its carefully fostered isolation prove to be?

It is not necessary to have the poet's eye or the historian's mind to feel that the year that lies ahead, 1948, centenary of Europe's year of revolution, will prove a turning point in history, one of those periods when a nation, when a whole civilization perhaps, is offered the opportunity of resolving its conflicts and its instabilities. Are narrow interests, old parochialism, legitimate but outdated national policies to stand in the way of any new approach to Europe's needs? And is Britain, once the most far-sighted and enterprising member of the Western community, to take the lead in re-establishing the worn-out pattern of the past?

BRITAIN'S ROLE IN AN INTEGRATED EUROPE

R. H. S. Crossman, British Labor MP and leader of the *Keep Left* group, writing in the *New Statesman and Nation* for November 22, 1947, well summarizes the main arguments this group has advanced of late for a more European orientation of British foreign policy.

If we are to avoid a creeping paralysis of our industrial life (writes Crossman), we cannot rely for many months on dumping the products of the export drive in markets steadily dwindling owing to the dollar famine. That would be as futile as reliance on American aid. What we need is first and foremost a common export-import area with our Western European neighbors and their overseas Empires, and second, stable trade relations with both the

New World and the Eastern Bloc. What we cannot afford to accept is a two-bloc world and a divided Europe. That is why we must have an independent British policy.

The issue is not whether we *should* surrender our status as a World Power capable of winning a world war. History has already taken that decision for us; and the task of a Labor Government is to accept our new position as an integral part of Europe and to work out a policy commensurate with it. In particular we should stop thinking about victory in a war and concentrate on seeking to prevent it.

This distinction is more important than appears at first sight. For hundreds of years we were so strong and so blessed by geography that we could manipulate the balance of power from outside Europe; and we have come to assume that the best way to prevent a war is to make as sure as we can that our side will win. But this is not universally true. Measures taken to win a war may provoke it. If so, they will not be in the interest of those nations for which the prevention of war is even more important than a problematic increase in the chances of victory. No British Foreign Secretary today can condemn out of hand a settlement simply because it fails to meet all the security requirements of the Chiefs of Staff in Washington. Indeed, no genuine peace settlement could possibly satisfy them. That is why he must hold himself free from any exclusive military association with America which limits his negotiating powers.

The ultimate objective of a truly independent policy must be the creation of a nucleus of the United States of Europe. In setting about this task we must assume that East-

ern Europe will be politically dominated by Russia for at least as long as Russia fears an inevitable clash with the West. Russian obstruction can only be removed by a British policy which recognizes both the Russian and the American spheres of influence, systematically attacks the causes of mutual distrust, and so creates the conditions for an overall settlement.

A sharp distinction must be made in our attitude to the two World Powers. In the short run, we should assume that nothing we say and little we do can change the monolith of suspicion on which Russian policy is based. The Kremlin is not open to persuasion, but the Americans might be brought to see the case for European independence. The Russians will only tolerate it grudgingly if it does not weaken their Western security belt; to them it might appear a lesser evil. But the Americans could be persuaded to accept it for its justice as well as its expediency.

The initiative, therefore, can only be taken by Britain and in Western Europe. Our first job must be to ensure that American aid is not given according to the Truman Doctrine, but along the lines laid down in Mr. Marshall's far-sighted Harvard Speech. We should persuade the Americans that, in their own interest, they should not follow the Russian example in Eastern Europe and turn Western Europe into an American security belt, but should exclude it from their defense system. Indeed, a policy of this kind, if initiated by Britain, would be welcomed by the vast majority of Americans. They have no wish to run Europe, and they would not be sorry to see a knot of European nations opt out of the ideological war, pool

their security and economic planning, and build up their trade relations without any regard for ideology. The assurance that Western Europe was going to fend for itself between the blocs would not embarrass but assist a genuine Marshall plan.

What we need today is a British initiative, taken in the closest consultation with the Commonwealth, to save even a fragment of Europe before it is too late. It is no use saying that we cannot act without France. France cannot now be saved—and nor can Italy—without a British decision to become the first member state of the United States of Europe; and to accept the revolutionary changes in her island position which this implies. Maybe at first only a few small Powers would join us. We should not be deterred. We should form a nucleus now, however small, of nations which recognize that European independence is a pre-condition of survival for Europe—and for civilization.

What should be the terms of the British proposals? Immediate and complete federation is out of the question, and at the other end of the scale, conversations about customs and tariffs are equally futile. It is the political issues which divide us, and we shall be well advised in the first instance to concentrate on foreign, defense, and colonial policy. Here, for instance, is a list of subjects on which it should not be impossible to reach constructive agreement with some of our Western European neighbors.

(1) Pooling of atomic research.

(2) The development of a regional security system under Uno, and an agreement to refuse all military commitments to Great Powers outside the group.

(3) Joint planning of colonial development.

(4) Joint planning of domestic heavy industries.

(5) An agreement to set up joint machinery for the allocation, between members of the group, of assistance received under the Marshall Plan.

If even three or four nations go ahead with unification along these lines, the effect in the rest of Europe and in Russia and America will be enormous. The mere fact that Britain has accepted her European destiny unreservedly may check the deadly process of international polarization which is leading in Eastern Europe to complete totalitarianism and in Western Europe to political disintegration. It would give fresh hope to democratic forces which are now despairing of the struggle. Most important of all, we should save ourselves from the barren choice between helpless isolation and subordination to a non-European Power. For British independence is not only impossible *without* European independence: it is impossible *outside* it.

USA, EUROPE, AND THE USSR

Marceau Pivert, President of the International Committee of Study and Action for the United Socialist States of Europe and a member of the Executive Committee of the French Socialist Party, has written a significant article concerning the need for a European Federation that has appeared in several French socialist publications.

The first stage of post-war development, that of national egoisms tightly enclosed in their autarchisms

of misery, and vegetating miserably among superb dreams of "grandeur" and "glory" (begins Mr. Pivert) will soon have passed. Whether they like it or not, the peoples of Europe are today swept forward on a huge wave of economic integration — a process which is dictated even more by the necessities of the domestic situation than by external circumstances. Two giant, young and dynamic powers — the US and the USSR—have created by their simple presence in the world, and even more by their fundamental antagonisms, a new international climate to which the Old Guard statesmen and bureaucrats, who lived through the period of European preponderance, find it difficult to adapt themselves. The socialist reformist trends, stemming from the world that existed prior to World War I, will not be able to survive this great historic process. The implementation of the Marshall Plan will inaugurate a new era for the masses of Europe. Internationalist and democratic socialism has foreseen the new period. This is the reason that from its ranks is coming the initiative for a progressive solution to this entirely new world situation.

The various Communist parties which throughout Europe have become the most reactionary defenders of nationalism are by this very fact being left behind. It has become absurd and monstrous to propagandize on one side of the Rhine in order to pit French workers against German workers who are being reproached for not producing enough coal in the Ruhr for export to France, while on the other side of the river an annexation campaign is carried on in the name of the French workers who supposedly

want to take the Saar and Ruhr away from Germany.

From now on the heavy tractors of American capitalism will roll over the sordid feudal oppositions which have been kept alive by the advocates of European balkanization. This will pose a very precise dilemma to the workers of Europe: it means either the restoration of the European economy within the framework of the strategic interests of the U. S., or the economic disintegration of the various European nations. The Stalinists will do all that is in their power to bring about the second result. Socialists of all tendencies, whatever their reservations, together with the enormous majority of the popular masses, will favor the first development.

But once Europe's economic forces and natural riches can be reorganized on a higher level, once Europe is able to recapture the creative capacity that characterized her former history, another dilemma will appear. Either planning will function within the framework of the exclusive interests of the big American export industries, or it must function in the common interests of all workers—not only of the workers of Europe but of the whole world, America and Russia included.

A CAPITALIST EUROPE?

If the European economy is reconstructed within a capitalist framework, it is evident that the reinvigorated ruling classes of Europe will be disposed to serve American monopoly capitalism, subordinating their ambitions to those of Wall Street. Thus an Americo-European power bloc, subject to the inner dynamic laws of capitalism, will

come into existence. But once the economic crisis, which already appears on the horizon, sets in, the European masses will once again become an easy prey for Stalinist or neo-fascist propaganda. The Stalinists and neo-fascists would then try to revive an especially virulent form of European nationalism. Such a development would have serious repercussions on America; the contagion would spread. The realignment of forces which would then occur (the US plus Europe against the USSR or the US against Europe plus the USSR, or any variation partitioning Europe between the two camps) would render a final catastrophe inevitable. Europe would become a battlefield, doubly colonized, enslaved and destroyed. In such a catastrophe, America would lose her traditional liberties; the sacrifices and oppression of the Russian people would increase many-fold. The resulting holocaust would mean the collective suicide of humanity, a self-destruction which in no way would contribute to the solution of those economic problems that are already posed on a world scale.

A SOCIALIST EUROPE?

If, on the contrary, the second course should be followed and Europe's economy reconstructed at a higher level (i.e., at a level superior to that which is possible under monopoly capitalism on the one hand or Stalinist bureaucratic collectivism on the other) then it would become possible to envisage a very different perspective and to open new vistas which promise general well-being, peace and liberty. It is toward such a socialist solution of the general world crisis that the efforts of the

International Committee for a Socialist United States of Europe are directed.

The central question which the European workers must ask themselves after the process of uniting Europe has actually started is: "*Who will own the key industries?*" The socialist answer is unequivocal: ownership of the key industries in all European countries must be vested in the most appropriate collectivities — municipalities, regional groups, nations, European confederation — organized according to the services which they are destined to render. Thus coal and iron mines, telegraph networks, airlines, etc., must be transferred to the European federative community. Contested ports such as Trieste and Danzig, disputed passageways such as the Dardanelles, Gibraltar and Skagerrak must be internationalized. European economic planning must be projected on a basis that does not lead to a competitive struggle with the American economy, but so as to provide jobs, goods and services to 400 million European workers on a scale that will enable them to live decent lives—fed, clothed, housed, educated and free from misery, dictatorship, fear, ignorance and war. Such a perspective is by no means utopian. A socialist civilization, created by the efforts of the workers themselves through their democratic institutions is politically feasible. The necessary and sufficient condition is that the great mass of citizens, who admittedly do not all think of themselves as socialists, discover that this solution is in harmony with their own desires and decide to act accordingly, fighting against all foreign intervention, against political machiavellianism and hypocrisy, stating their belief clearly and

openly and thus making it impossible for the agents of the money powers or of the totalitarian state to exercise their pernicious influence.

It is also necessary, no doubt, that statesmen who think of themselves as socialists but who act simply as caretakers of the old regime retire in favor of younger and more dynamic elements, in favor of those who have a greater awareness of the international solidarity of the socialist and labor movement. But this will surely occur some day

Once the movement for a United States of Europe commands the audience throughout Europe that it already has gained among the socialist and trade union masses of Britain, the perspectives concerning the world crisis and the Third World War will immediately be modified. The masses, once turned in the direction of this constructive and progressive solution, will automatically be freed of the dangerous tendency of polarization in one or the other contending power blocs. The workers of America will feel their solidarity with the workers of Europe in their concerted resistance to the pretensions of the money powers and in their common concern for trade union and political democracy. Every attack of American capitalism on free labor in America is indeed closely linked with the struggle European workers

must wage in order to defend and develop the nationalized, and later internationalized, sectors of the economy. On the other hand, every victory of socialist technique in industrial organization and democratization of the European economy will weaken the power of American big business in its struggles with the American workers.

Integration of the emerging socialist economies of Europe with those of the other countries of the world must be determined by the complementary character of the respective needs and not by profit considerations. Production must be carried out in those regions where the particular product can be produced with the least possible expenditure of labor power.

Given such a development, the American people will free themselves from the powerful and devouring mechanism of imperialism. And the Russian people, too, will learn and benefit immeasurably from an example, on their own doorstep, of socialist reconstruction conceived in liberty and respecting the fundamental human values which our civilization has elaborated over the centuries. All this is well known both in Washington and Moscow. Will the powers-that-be succeed in silencing our appeals? Whatever happens in the next ten years the alternatives will remain the same: *either a Socialist Europe or a Third World War!*

INFLATIONARY NOTE

CHEAPER THAN DIVORCE. Everything's gone up—including the price of a divorce—but the cost of happiness. You can still buy that commodity and get pretty much a hundred cents on your dollar at the Hotel Berkeley-Carteret in Asbury Park, N. J. It includes an outside room and bath, three delicious meals and any sport a day you prefer.—Ad in the *New York Times*.

BOOKS

BALKAN JOURNEY

Emilie Rosdolsky

One of the most fascinating aspects of this book¹ is the metamorphosis its author undergoes while touring Southeastern Europe. He set out on his journey in early 1945 as a "liberal," who "did not look for Utopia in the areas under Soviet influence or occupation, but for a minimum amount of decency and good faith" and "had more misgivings about us than about the Russians"; who was concerned about the outcome of the civil war in Greece, about the "Americans and the British propping up the decrepit house of Piedmont" in Italy, about their "wheedling and flattering a totalitarian regime" in Spain and Turkey. He ended it as a severe critic of the "liberal mind," which believes that "the only way to stop Soviet totalitarianism is by purging our own house of the last cobweb of reaction." He advocates a firm stand against Russian expansionism and Communist aggrandizement, in order to "prevent the hour when Soviet strength would have swelled sufficiently to risk the ultimate trial."

Whatever attitude the reader may take towards these conclusions, it cannot be denied that *Russia's Europe* is an interesting and honest book. In reading it one comes to

like the author for his sympathies towards those who are not in power and for his distrust of authority. These qualities are inherent in his chapter on Greece as well as in his recording of events on the other side of the "iron curtain." Mr. Lehrman sincerely tries to discover how the people feel about those who rule them, and is never satisfied with official statements. It seems that in Greece it was easier for him than elsewhere to contact the Opposition, for his criticism of the Greek government is livelier and more impressive than his description of the evils committed by Soviet-dominated regimes. This, of course, may be taken as an indication of the fact that there is more freedom and less fear in Greece than in Yugoslavia, Rumania or other countries the author visited. Nevertheless, the economic and political inefficiency of the Greek government, its reactionary and monarchist sympathies, its tolerance for Greece's war-time Quislings, its persecution not only of Communists but also of every progressive movement in the country, and the bloody atrocities committed by its followers, become glaringly evident on the basis of Mr. Lehrman's reporting.

II

From Greece the author proceeds to Yugoslavia. He is still sympathetic to the Partisan regime and

¹ *Russia's Europe* by Hal Lehrman. D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc. New York 1947. \$3.75.

willing to believe that this regime favors a free and democratic country. He attends the trial of the "Chetniks" which seems to establish sufficient evidence of Mihailovitch's cooperation with the Germans in fighting the Partisans. He is favorably impressed by the general amnesty, granted in August, 1945, and by the abolition of censorship over foreign correspondents. But already the first Congress of the "United Nations Liberation Front of Yugoslavia" seems to him "a little remote from model democracy." The delegates, nominated by various organizations, do not seem to represent the nation adequately. The unanimity which greets every speech and motion is not reassuring.

The author's confidence in the new regime becomes still more shaken by his first encounter with the *Ozna*, the secret police. Two young men of his acquaintance are arrested for "pro-American speeches." Though they have not done anything illegal, it takes the author's utmost efforts to secure their release. This incident reveals to him the way the political police work, especially when he learns that both young men are too scared to continue their acquaintance with him, and that their careers have been ruined. In the light of this experience Mr. Lehrman re-examines his earlier attitude towards the Chetnik-trial and discovers he was more taken-in by it than he should have been. In a country where the political police is allmighty, political trials can be staged so as to prove whatever the regime wishes to prove.

The author next meets several people who once sympathized with the Partisans, but who have discovered that the new regime is not actually interested in freedom and

democracy. He is much impressed by an interview with Milan Grol, who has just resigned as vice-premier in Tito's cabinet and who charges the government with outlawing every potential opposition on the strength of a nominated Parliament controlled by a small ruling clique. This Parliament races through a whole series of fundamental laws without opposition or even serious debate. The law which is to guarantee the right of association and assembly, denies this to all "fascist" or "pro-fascist" organizations, or to parties, which "spread discord," without giving any proper definition of the latter. Only two daily newspapers are permitted in Belgrade—one the official organ of the Communist Party, the other the organ of the Communist-controlled government. All weekly and monthly magazines are concentrated in the hands of pro-government groups; the only independent journal, the organ of the "Agrarian Party," is allotted so little paper that it can be issued only as a weekly, and then it is constantly "disemboweled" by the censor.

All this is done in the name of the so-called "People's Democracy" which turns out to be just a preliminary form for the establishment of a totalitarian regime—a regime which no longer needs the support of the people but maintains power by terror alone.

III

The author devotes the greater part of his book to Yugoslavia, partly because it was here that his change of mind occurred, partly because the situation in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria is not fundamentally different from that in Yu-

goslavia, but varies only by degrees. In giving an outline of the pre-war history of those countries, the author vividly portrays the backward, half-feudalistic conditions prevailing there before the Russian occupation; the lack of social justice and democratic rights for the toiling masses, the greed and inefficiency of the ruling classes. He admits that the idea of a social revolution which would change the life of the people for the better was extremely popular in these countries. Many of the men who are now installed in power suffered imprisonment and cruel tortures at a time when they still wanted to lead the oppressed people against their oppressors and to gain for them justice and freedom. They believed then that Russia was their ally in a fight for a better world. But things turned out differently. The Russian Army has not brought freedom to the countries it invaded. The Russian soldiers looted and raped. They are dominated by chauvinist hatred and by the spirit of revenge. Russia's main concern in the invaded countries is to take from them everything that could be helpful in the reconstruction of Russian economy, regardless of what that means to the people living there. Consequently they can no longer rely on the sympathies and the support of these people. Those men who have pledged themselves to co-operate with Russia become mere puppets. It is not possible for them to govern by democratic means, as they cannot execute the will of the people, but only that of the conqueror. Consequently the non-Communist parties are gradually eliminated and power becomes concentrated in the hands of those submissive to Stalin.

All this is revealed by the author

most graphically when he records what he has seen and heard in the Russian-occupied countries, in which he travelled for two years. Sometimes, however, he seems overly impressed by the critics of the new regime, as, for example, when he denies that the land reform program in Hungary spells progress, and notices only that it was done in a clumsy and inefficient way. Conceding this, one must nevertheless admit that the program of distributing land to the farmers is an improvement over the days when ownership of large estates was concentrated in the hands of the Magyar magnates.

When he goes to Czechoslovakia, the author is surprised to see that a real democracy of the Western kind still exists there, though the Communists have the strongest party and the country is in close alliance with Russia. The explanation for this remarkable exception can only be that the country has a tradition of many years of democratic development, under which the people matured in political thinking and activity. It is much more difficult to establish a dictatorship in such a country than in those Southeastern European countries whose people have never really known the meaning of freedom. But when Czechoslovakia suddenly and without consulting the people refuses to participate in the Marshall Plan, it is clear that this country too dares not resist the orders from Russia, to whose sphere of influence it belongs.

IV

At the end of his journey the author returns to Greece. He is still not sympathetic towards the Greek government, which at that time was

busily manipulating a monarchist majority through the general elections. But in comparing Greece with the Soviet-dominated countries, Mr. Lehrman considers it "a crude and almost obscene simplification to lump the evils of both systems in the same sack, and pronounce equal condemnation on the democracies and the Russians for supporting such systems."

Thus his contact with reality has robbed him of his "liberal" illusions and has forced him to change his attitude very abruptly. Mr. Lehrman still does not want the Western powers to become allies of Greek and Turkish reaction, and advocates a foreign policy designed to strengthen the democratic forces in both countries. Let us hope that these assumptions are not also illusions. Until now power-politics have rarely had a favorable influence on democratic development.

ACADEMICIANS AND POWER

Harold Orlansky

"How can we retain the essential advantages of our civilization, including its scientific and material assets, and yet bring the quest for power and the tendency toward aggression under control?"

An eclectic collection of intellectuals discusses this question in the present volume,¹ a record of the proceedings of the Seventh Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion. The results are of interest

not so much for the answers which are given as for the light which they throw on the nature of the American academician.

The answers themselves are singularly evasive. Even the editors remark upon "the failure of seven meetings to distill . . . any formula which can guide men in the perplexity of our day." But they are "by no means discouraged" at this failure. Surely they would be dismayed by success. Mutual approbation (and tenure) is pleasanter than strife; and abstract generalization is the path to approbation; God save us from practicality and partisanship!

The sixty-two contributors fall into two groups—conservative and liberal (that there are no radicals is testimony to the discrimination of the directors, the stupefying effect of academic life and, presumably, the intelligence of the radicals in choosing more efficacious careers).

The conservatives detect some difficulties in the prevailing power system, but no system lacks defects; their faith abides in Free Enterprise, and their reason is reconciled to their faith. "I am ready to die out of nature and to be born again into this new yet unapproachable America I have found in the West." Emerson's words still inspire their visions. But the retailing of personality, the fragmentation of values, the raucousness of daily life in this America that they have found? These are seen as mere vestiges of the pioneering virtues which will

¹ *Conflicts of Power in Modern Culture*. Edited by Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein and R. M. MacIver, Harper & Bros., New York, 1947, 703 pp., \$6.50.

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be absorbed with profit in a maturing democracy. Production is the solution to problems in all areas of the culture, as well as of the economy: "... full production . . . is the ruling imperative of our time. A cultural matrix fitted to this imperative can give to industry all the nobility and beauty which a corresponding matrix gave to the ruling imperatives of knighthood and Holy Church in the twelfth century."

It is not hard to perceive that the conservatives are disturbed only by those power conflicts which threaten to unseat them. They yearn for the security of a peaceful stratified society—"groups tend to get along together better when each . . . regards itself as superior and has no particular desire to be socially accepted by the other." However, riding the lion's back (or, rather, clutching its mane) they are not above experimenting with an occasional roar. Malcolm Sharp of the Law School of Chicago University may be cited as an example. He appears to have almost ruffled the tranquility of the colloquium by rejecting the very (diffuse) proposition upon which it was convened. Bring the quest for power and aggressiveness under control? Not Mr. Sharp. Aggressiveness has produced Henry Ford and it is good enough for him too: "I am sure that the teachings of Jesus . . . will not afford an adequate . . . philosophy of law in any society. . . . I should consider it of first-rate importance to recognize and value fully the vigorous, egoistic drives which are responsible for so much of our civilization . . . observe how much liberty and culture owe to the acquisitiveness, pride, and gambling spirit of business leaders."

Moved to criticize this argument, Edgar Brightman suggests "there are some of us who believe that our commercial society is in great need of reform. . . ." This brings us to the liberals. They are of two sorts: idealists and materialists.

II

As might be anticipated, the idealists are in the majority. Their philosophy feeds a soul-warming fire in a cold clime and, incidentally, affords a satisfying rationale for their customary occupation with ideas. For if ideas move men, one can change the direction of their movement with more ideas, and no place is so suited to the manufacture of ideas as a cushioned university chair. The passion for social reform and contemplation are thus brought into fortunate opposition.

The idealists' formulations are absolute, universal, and imbued with the love of all mankind. "Culture must find its way back to an insight into the metaphysics of justice beyond historicism, relativism, and formalism." "Science, philosophy, and religion must unite, for the crisis of the hour is moral and spiritual, as well as social and physical" . . . "a new respect for truth in all its aspects must be developed if the power mania in our culture is to be restrained." In the last quotation we hear from Mr. Brightman again. The Truth invigorates him: ". . . power in the long run rests on truth, not truth on power . . . no nation can exalt righteousness unless righteousness first exalts that nation. . . . The military successes of Caesar and Napoleon have evaporated, but Roman law and the Code Napoleon remain." Doubtless Caesar's victims take comfort in that fact.

The pathways of reason are infinite, and were the idealists' position correct, it would seem impossible to choose one path over another on purely rational grounds, or for a philosopher perched on one cloud of thought to have any influence upon a colleague seated on another cloud. One must have traction to move. This the materialists have perceived.

III

But to what wheel of the social machine can traction most profitably be applied? A rather humorous economic determinism appears to condition the solutions which are advanced for this problem. The educators (e.g., Ruth Strang, I. L. Kandel) believe that education is the clue to social change; George Rohrich narrows this down to *adult* education, and one suspects he has had professional experience in that line. Not only do psychiatrists (e.g., L. K. Frank) advise preventive psychiatric measures in infancy to eliminate calamity-breeding (so they say) neurotic disturbances in adulthood, but it has been observed that the specialists who are called upon to institute these measures are divided in their theoretical orientation in accordance with their occupations: the pediatricians emphasize that the child's psychological needs come first, even at the price of some parental frustration, while the obstetricians are apt to hold that strengthening the mother's emotional stability is the decisive way to fashion a healthy child. And so on and on. One begins to wonder will it ever be possible to get off this epiphenomenal carrousel and obtain some objective information on how best to effect social change.

Assuredly there are legitimate

dilemmas in this realm which will not be solved by a few judicious words. The relation of political ideas to class position or, more broadly phrased, of ideology to social structure, grossly stated by Marx, remains a perplexing and subtle problem. But the incredible thing about the American academician is not that he has not superseded Marx, but that he has never discovered him. Presuming to analyze the power conflicts of our day, contributors to the present volume display, instead, an ignorance of the most elementary aspects of power structuring in American society, and a political naiveté which is matched only by that of their non-academic confrères in the great American middle-class. Accordingly, it will hardly come as a surprise to learn that in the entire volume there is no concrete appraisal of inter-class relations, of the driving forces of the economy or of the corporate or governmental mechanisms which direct it. To say that (1) politics is the area in which social change is effected and (2) economics is the area of primary importance in effecting political developments is to reveal secrets of which the average academician is unaware.

In place of political awareness, he substitutes a faith in the efficacy of social science to remedy the woes of the times. (Eliot Chapple and Carleton Coon are outstanding examples; they call for "an international institute for a practical science of human relations . . . dedicated to the single task of predicting and planning the future adjustment of populations. . . .") We will not comment on the hopeless inadequacy of the tools of these aspiring social engineers, on their uncritical acceptance of the going power sys-

tem, on their immodest answer to Karl Mannheim's question, "Who is going to plan the planners?"

IV

In the light of everything we have said, the hope seems ill-founded, but one thing this reviewer would like to get some day from the social scientists is some comprehension of what has happened to the individual in a society where vast power mechanisms beyond his control channel every action of his life. A good deal of evidence is available to document the picture, but someone has yet to draw it in full detail. Parts of the picture are: dressmakers, operating sewing machines in a loft resounding with noise, who shout and cry out spontaneously in a wild and meaningless chorus; aim-

less young men who derive their only feelings of accomplishment from drunken driving, drunken fornicating, and that most ubiquitous achievement of the American citizen, the cigarette; the whole garish pornographic complex which sells naked bodies and souls for five cents, two bits, or a dollar at the local newsstand, cinema, and burlesque house; the impotent gangster with his gun; the poolroom, bowling alley, race track, pinball machine, bridge game which provide the ball-in-the-hole, the strike, the jackpot, the high score to cap a dull day. When the picture is finally drawn, we believe it will show that most people in the most powerful nation in the world have not the child's power to stand unaided, or to make something simple by their own labor.

Amplification

EDITOR'S NOTE: Modern Review for January, 1948, presented a report by Maurice J. Goldbloom on the Antwerp Conference. Space limitations necessitated some rather drastic cuts in the article. The elimination of two paragraphs was particularly unfortunate and Mr. Goldbloom writes in to say that the effect of dropping them was "to leave an impression of unadulterated gloom which I didn't intend." We are glad to correct any such false impression by publishing the two paragraphs here.

A slight advance was made by this (the Antwerp) Conference in an organizational sense. It established a permanent committee, consisting of one representative from each affiliated party, to maintain contact between conferences. It also provided for regular semi-annual conferences, as well as for regional conferences within the general framework. More important than these steps toward the building of a more effective organization, however, was the growing realization of the Western democratic socialist parties as the Conference progressed that no concessions to the Eastern group would create the possibility of real agreement. This temper showed itself in the increasingly sharp debates on question of principle. Nevertheless, the will to appease, even though weakened, still persisted at the end of the Conference.

One hopeful result of Antwerp is likely to be a conference of socialist parties in the Marshall Plan area to work out a common approach to that question. Many of the delegates were extremely anxious that such a meeting be held in the near future.

LETTERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: In *Modern Review* for November, 1947, we published an article by M. Dynnik entitled "Contemporary Bourgeois Philosophy in the United States" in which the author, in conformity with the new philosophic "line" laid down by General Zhdanov in Moscow, went all-out in his attack on American philosophy and philosophers as tools of American imperialism and Wall Street. Professor Sidney Hook replied in the same issue, taking the position that M. Dynnik's diatribe was "philosophically beneath contempt."

It occurred to us that American philosophers, many of whom had been mentioned by name in M. Dynnik's article, would be interested in the controversy. Therefore we sent this issue of *Modern Review* to a representative list of American philosophers and invited their comment. The replies received to date are published below.

PROFESSOR RALPH BARTON PERRY (Harvard)

Thank you for sending me the number of the *Modern Review* containing Mr. Dynnik's "Animadversions on American Philosophy." I do not see how such vituperation can be taken seriously—except as a symptom.

PROFESSOR GEORGE BOAS (Johns Hopkins)

I have read Dynnik's article, as you requested. As for my "reaction to the justice and accuracy of Mr. Dynnik's report and the validity of his criticisms," I agree with Mr. Hook's comment that the whole thing is beneath contempt as philosophy. It makes me think of the sort of thing Claire Luce writes about the Russians or what Monsignor Sheen writes about psychoanalysis. In both America and Russia there are people who confuse invective with exposition. The horror of it is that in Dynnik's case, the confusion is deliberate government policy, as far as one can tell.

PROFESSOR FREDERICK BURKHARDT (President of Bennington College)

I am happy to give you my comments on the Dynnik piece—though Sidney Hook's remarks leave very little to say.

First, as a piece of philosophical exposition it is beyond the pale. It is quite clear that there is not the slightest attempt to do anything like justice to any views taken up. From the way it is written, however, I suspect that Dynnik does understand the views he is "presenting." I think it is rather important for us not to be misled into thinking that men like Dynnik and Alexandrov¹ are altogether fools, and that this sort of stuff is to be read in the same way that a philosophical criticism in this country is to be read. I understand that Alexandrov's *History of Western Philosophy* has fairly objective expository sections preceding the Soviet attack. This work was condemned by Zhdanov as showing too much

¹ Mr. Alexandrov is a Soviet philosopher who has also launched an attack on American philosophy, using as his principal target Professor John Dewey.—EDITOR.

respect for bourgeois philosophy. Dynnik's article evidently represents a sample of the next stage—simply knock 'em down *without* first building 'em up.

The question I had when I finished was, "Why do they bother to do this sort of thing at all?" Perhaps it is simply to go through the form of discussing Western culture. They must know that the chances of the readers of the *Bolshevik*² ever reading Dewey, Santayana or Flewelling are remote. So it can't be that they are interested in "guiding" the readers to a "safe" interpretation. It may be that they feel *compelled* to discuss the West and America and this sort of article is as far as they dare go in such a discussion. If so, it's encouraging, in a back-handed sort of way.

I agree with Sidney Hook when he points out that Dynnik knows which views are most dangerous to Soviet philosophy and that Dewey and Pragmatism are seen to be the greatest enemy. It was interesting, therefore, to see how little space Dynnik gave to Neo-Scholasticism—simply brushing it off with a single reference. (At least this is so if, as I gather, your condensation did not leave out any views discussed but simply condensed the argument on each.)

I hope you will continue to translate such articles. One piece like Dynnik's, or a book like *I Want To Be Like Stalin* is more effective and illuminating than a dozen "think-pieces" produced on this side of the ocean. Incidentally, I've been trying to remember what the tone of Dynnik's article reminded me of. Now it comes to me—some of the articles in the *New Leader*.

PROFESSOR C. J. DUCASSE (Brown University)

To discuss critically Mr. Dynnik's assertions would be as naive as to mistake a caricature for a portrait and laboriously point out where it fails to represent accurately the sitter's features. Mr. Dynnik's piece is simply a quasi-religious tract, setting forth the line dictated by the fundamentalist interpreters of the scriptures of communist orthodoxy.

It is hard to imagine that Mr. Dynnik really believes the things he says. Yet perhaps he does, for one must remember that a famous fundamentalist of another sect, the late William Jennings Bryan, undoubtedly did believe the things he said in the course of the celebrated Scopes evolution trial. But whether or not Mr. Dynnik believes what he says, he doubtless believes that he ought to say it anyway; for the ultimate "ought" of the present Soviet ideology is to attain power; and to this end, any means that seem likely to work are means which it holds *ought* to be employed—even, to quote Lenin, "any ruse, cunning, unlawful method, evasion, concealment of truth."

These words of his are the tacit major premise of all statements emanating from, or authorized by, the Soviet policy makers, and the realistic reader should insert them explicitly at the head of each. For to take their statements as formulating honest beliefs, instead of only as psychological means of bending readers or hearers, whether Russian or foreign, to the furtherance of communist power is as ingenuous as it would be to take advertisements of cigarettes, lotions, or

² Soviet Russian magazine in which the Dynnik and Alexandrov articles originally appeared.—EDITOR.

nostrums, as expressions of their writers' sincere convictions, instead of as merely means of inducing innocents to buy the stuff.

Mr. Dynnik's tract, of course, is intended for Russian readers and is likely to persuade them since the poor souls are carefully deprived of access to the facts, lest they succumb to "objectivism!" To an American philosopher, however, his tract sounds like a defective phonograph record that, at the places where grounds for what it says are in order, jumps to a groove of such question-begging epithets as "reactionary," "bourgeois," "imperialist," "exploiter," "enemy of the people," and the like. The word "reactionary," in particular, whose mere utterance is apparently assumed to have a magic to settle all questions instantly, occurs no less than 36 times!

As for me, I proclaim myself enthusiastically bourgeois if it means believing that sincerity, fairness, good faith, good will, kindness, considerateness, respect for the dignity and freedom of one's fellows, and other such old-fashioned virtues, are intrinsic constituents of heaven on earth, and believing that actually to practice them is a far more potent means to a good life for mankind than is faith in any particular brand of pie-in-the-future, whether the recipe alleged to bake it be the communistic, the capitalistic, the fascistic, the socialistic, or the theological. Ideological pancakes and beautiful promises are a nickel a dozen, and every "ism" alike easily affords to spread them in its show window.

But a man, or a state, or a system, are more realistically appraised by noticing how they actually behave than by attending to what

they say. By this test, present American civilization has grave defects, which it would be fatal to blink, and which we must continue striving hard to improve. But by that same test our civilization appears almost lily-white, as compared with the jail of mind and body which is Mr. Dynnik's idea of a home.

PROFESSOR EDGAR S. BRIGHT- MAN (Boston University)

Modern Review has done a great service in printing its translation of M. Dynnik's article. In response to the editor's courteous invitation, I shall comment on Mr. Dynnik's criticism of my thought.

He has quoted correctly from statements made by me in *Approaches to World Peace* (Harpers, 1944), pp. 542 and 556; but in both cases the quotation is distorted by failure to quote the context. I do, in his first quotation, agree with Vico that "the social world is the work of man," and say that "man makes war and man makes peace guided by his ideas." But Dynnik declares that this is "aimed at diverting attention from the true social causes of the Second World War which are inherent in the system of imperialism itself." In the context, however, I had made plain what I meant by ideas; "social order and social disorder," I said, "in the main are the result of deliberate human choices, choices to plan or to neglect planning, to work or to exploit the labor of others, to maintain a social order or to seek private advantage regardless of social good." In short, the ideas I was talking about were largely Marxist ideas; and were Mr. Dynnik reading carefully and honestly he could hardly disagree with me. I stand pat on the thesis against Feuerbach: "previous

philosophies have only interpreted the world differently; the main thing is to change it." Only you have to have ideas if you try to change it.

Similarly, he rightly says that I hold theistic faith to be a help toward peace, although I do not make it "the panacea." However, Mr. Dynnik overlooks my main point. Following my avowal of theism, I add: "But it would be disastrous were we to allow differences in our thought about Nature or God to embroil us in quarrels which should lead us to forget our common humanity and the right of every person and society to a conscious enjoyment of the good life." In short, while I believe in God, I think it would be absurd and immoral to insist on belief in God as a condition of peace. We must learn to live together peaceably, despite metaphysical and religious differences. Professor Sidney Hook and I for example, can get along very well together, while rejecting each other's metaphysics. These principles lead Mr. Dynnik to comment that my "philosophy of personalism is used for bedeviling and duping the masses in the interests of American reaction which seeks to instigate a new world war." I can see no logic by which he could reconcile that comment with my desire to avert war by living peaceably with those who do and those who do not believe in God.

It is such distortions of truth that cause observers to lose all confidence in Communists.

**PROFESSOR FILMER S.C.
NORTHRUP (Yale)**

After reading Mr. Dynnik's article I do not know quite what you mean by your statement that he

attacked my "philosophic school." I do not happen to classify under any one of the American philosophical movements which he attacked. Also, if you mean the position of the Yale school rather than my own position, then again I do not know what you mean, since our Yale philosophical school is made up of people representing many radically different philosophical positions.

Assuming Mr. Dynnik's premises, rather naively conceived, what he says of course follows. I found no evidence in the article, however, that his particular premises can be assumed to be absolutely valid to the cock-sure degree which he intimates.

**PROFESSOR HORACE M. KALLEN
(New School)**

I have read the material on "Contemporary Bourgeois Philosophy in the United States" by a Mr. Dynnik, which is printed in the November issue of the *Modern Review*. As an account of the nature, origins, and method of philosophical thinking in the United States it seems to me entirely unworthy of attention. It has value, perhaps, as a symptom of how actualities may be distorted by doctrine, and it is a warning to innocent readers to be wary of statements made about non-Communists in terms of the Communist articles of faith. Only the Nazis have equalled this achievement in distortion and misrepresentation. I do not see why anybody wants to bother with the stuff.

**PROFESSOR GLEN R. MORROW
(University of Pennsylvania)**

A distorting caricature of contemporary American philosophy.

